

Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

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Soviet citizens cautious about reform



Photo: The Christian Science Monitor
Muscovites at Lenin's tomb

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Opinion polls have come to the Soviet Union, with some striking results.

The *Christian Science Monitor* commissioned a poll of workers in Moscow to find out how they feel about the changes in Soviet society which President Gorbachev is pushing. Those who responded support Gorbachev's initiatives and the trend toward democracy.

Some 61 per cent feel that Gorbachev's reforms will eventually succeed while only 15 per cent answered with a clear "no." Those who answered positively have more hope for reform of political institutions than of the economy. It is interesting that older people are distinctly more optimistic about reforms than young people are.

In addition to the question about reforms, three other questions were asked: Has your standard of living changed in the last three years; what aspect of life is most in need of change; what do you consider to be the best and worst features of Soviet life?

Respondents were evenly divided over whether their standard of living has changed. Those who experienced a decline cited inflation, lack of consumer goods, low pensions and difficulty in paying for such services as medical care. None of the 18- and 19-year-olds felt that life has improved, while about 31 per cent of the oldest age group feel that things have improved.

Highest on the importance list was the need for legal reform. Then came the need for economic, political and administrative reform, followed by a wish for improvement in the supply of basic goods and services.

Responses freer now

The absence of unemployment was cited by some as the most positive aspect of their lives. Some were concerned that if economic reforms are successful,

unemployment will be introduced to Soviet society.

Reporting on the results of the poll in the *Monitor*, Paul Quinn-Judge says that people responding to the poll were much more open and less guarded in their answers than would have been the case a few years ago. Since Soviet media and public debate these days focuses mostly on public failures rather than successes, people find it easier to point to problems than to the positive features of their lives. They dislike the power and privileges of bureaucrats, drunkenness and lack of discipline in society, queues and shortages of basic goods.

See SOVIET — p. 2

Problems of single-parent families not being addressed

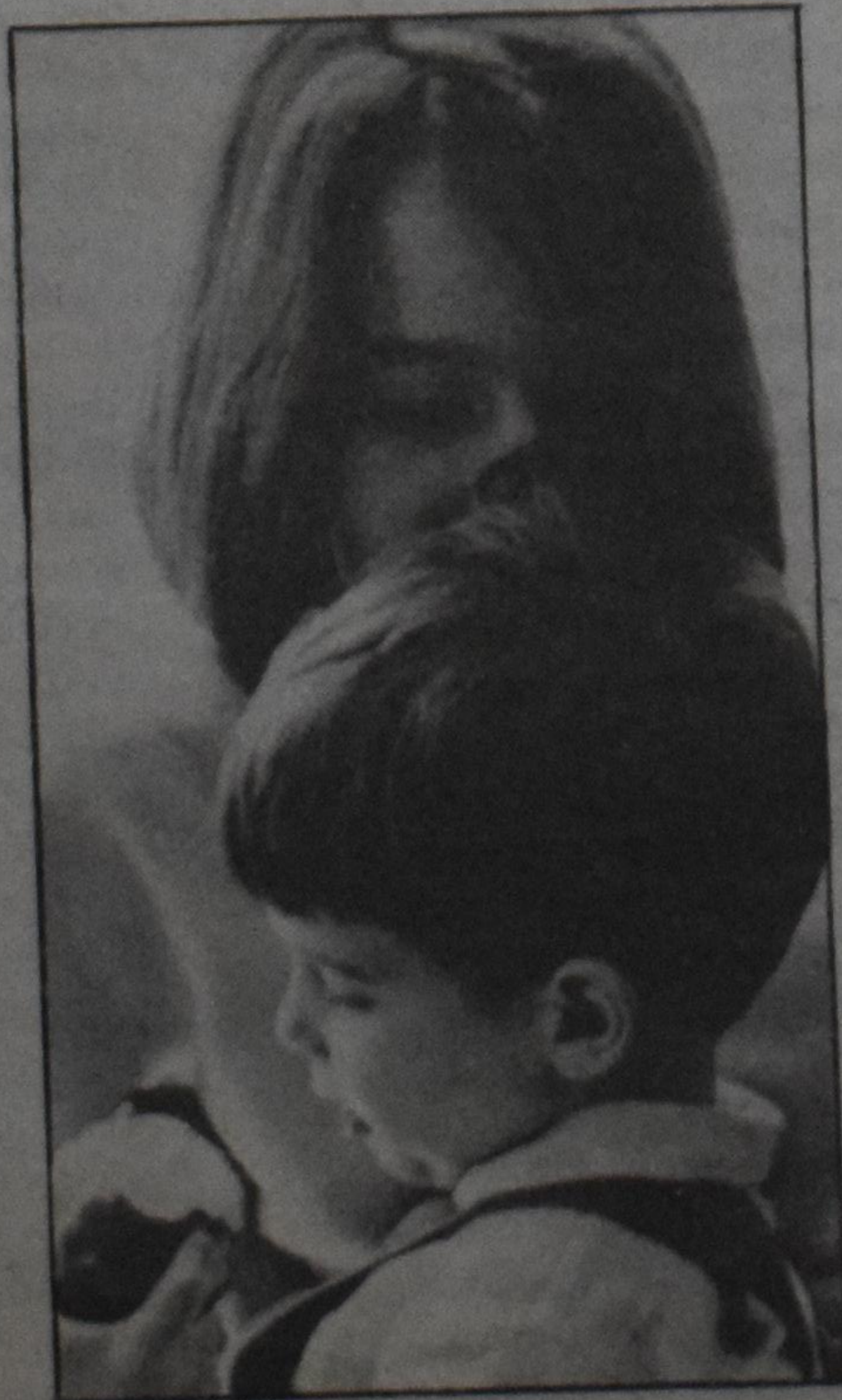


Photo: Call them Canadians

Only 43 per cent are in the work force.

Modernizing arms race poses threat

Paul De Groot

EDMONTON — Testing of cruise missiles in Alberta has become a major factor in the arms race, an expert has told Edmonton religious leaders.

Simon Rosenblum, a researcher with Project Ploughshares, said the focus of the arms race has shifted since the signing of arms reduction treaties last year. The treaties called for significant cuts in the number of weapons the nuclear superpowers can deploy. Now, said Rosenblum, both sides are concentrating on "modernizing" the weapons they still have.

But "the world will not be a safer place if all the treaties produce is leaner but meaner nuclear forces," Rosenblum said.

Advanced cruise missiles are a key component in modernization of the American nuclear arsenal. Arms reduction treaties will banish cruise missiles from Europe, but development is still proceeding on new versions of the cruise missile which will be deadlier and more difficult to detect, Rosenblum said.

Versatile and deadly

The cruise missile is a small, easily-transported weapon which can fly long distances close to the ground. It seeks its target using computerized maps and guidance systems. The missiles are relatively cheap to build and large

Thinkbit

Equality of law can be very oppressive for certain segments of the population, as is evident from the following quotation: "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids all men to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets and to steal bread — the rich as well as the poor."

Quotation by Anatole France

In this issue:

Report and speeches from meeting about place and task of *Calvinist Contact* pp. 8-11
An orphan girl from Bangladesh visits her home country with her adoptive parents pp. 12-13
Rehoboth crisis pregnancy centre in Springfield, Ont., offers refuge and hope p. 16

numbers of them can be hidden easily, making it difficult to determine how many a country owns. They can be launched from ground vehicles, aircraft, ships or submarines.

The advanced cruise missile being developed by the United States (and tested in Alberta) will use "stealth" technology which will make it invisible to most radar. It will also be supersonic, flying much faster than the present generation of cruise missiles.

These developments make the advanced cruise missile a "first strike" weapon, capable of surprising the enemy before they are even aware they are under attack.

Rosenblum accused the federal government of hypocrisy in its handling of cruise-missile testing.

The original rationale for permitting the testing in Alberta was to maintain Canada's role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an alliance organized to defend Western Europe against Soviet invasion.

But recent arms reduction treaties have eliminated intermediate nuclear weapons such as the cruise missile from Europe.

Still testing

Nevertheless, the government continues to permit testing of the missile in Canada. It now says the testing gives Canadian forces an opportunity to practise identifying incoming cruise missiles and defending Canada against them.

Project Ploughshares, supported by all major Canadian churches and a number of other organizations, has launched a major postcard campaign urging Parliament to act more effectively against the testing and deployment of nuclear weapons. It hopes to send a million postcards to MPs during its "On Track" campaign, Rosenblum said.

Those who oppose the use and development of nuclear weapons must work extra hard to help people understand the dangers of modernization of existing nuclear arsenals, Rosenblum said.

"People are feeling relaxed" as a result of recent arms reduction treaties, Rosenblum said. "The heat is off. Peace is breaking out all over."

But if both sides come out of the current round of arms reductions with more accurate and more effective weapons, "they could well increase the danger rather than increase it," Rosenblum said.

See SIZABLE — p. 2.

Sizable problems

... continued from page 1.
increased the legal grounds for divorce, as a major factor in the rise of single-parent families.

Although divorce is now perceived as a valid option to marital difficulties, the New Brunswick researcher states that "the solution has created as many problems as it has solved." Although different from the original trouble, these are "of equal or greater magnitude." Corbett urges a comprehensive evaluation of the single-parent phenomenon, so that the issues can be addressed.

In 1986, 12.7 per cent of Atlantic Canadian families were headed by a single parent, of whom more than 82 per cent were female. Most were located outside of large urban centres, with the highest concentration in small communities. One implication is that these families live in areas where day care, employment opportunities and low cost

shelter are limited.

Corbett found that single parents tend to have less education than their married counterparts. He calls those with less than Grade 9 education "functionally illiterate." Over half of all male single parents fell into this category.

Female single parents also have less training and education than the average population. This further restricts their ability to hold down worthwhile employment. Only 43 per cent of women raising their children alone are active in the workforce, compared to 69 per cent of the men.

Inadequate housing

Corbett drew several conclusions from the data gathered. He had expected to find that more families in rural areas would support single parents, for example, by

sharing a home with them, than in urban centres. In fact, the difference proved to be minor, although in Newfoundland there's a higher incidence of multi-generational homes.

With social assistance the most common form of income, over three-quarters of families headed by a single woman had incomes of under \$10,000. Corbett concludes that the vast majority cannot afford

adequate housing. This is shown in the 43 per cent of single female parents who rent rather than own their home, compared to only 18 per cent of two-parent families. Three quarters of such women paid out more than 34 per cent of their income for shelter.

The New Brunswick researcher points to the need for more day care programs, affordable housing units suited

to small families, better access to education, and levels of social assistance that adequately meet the needs of single-parent families. He says existing government agencies fail to co-ordinate their efforts, so that present policies of dealing with such families do not work. Government, says Corbett, needs to take a more comprehensive and integrated approach to the situation.

Soviet opinion poll

... continued from page 1.
On the positive side, 31 per cent pointed to Gorbachev and *perestroika* as the best thing in Soviet society today. Few workers identified the radical economic reforms now being introduced in industry. But the Soviet public is becoming more free and independent, says Quinn-Judge, because a few years ago most respondents to a poll like this would have merely given the safe answer, praising their current leader and stopping there.

Less fear of U.S. attack

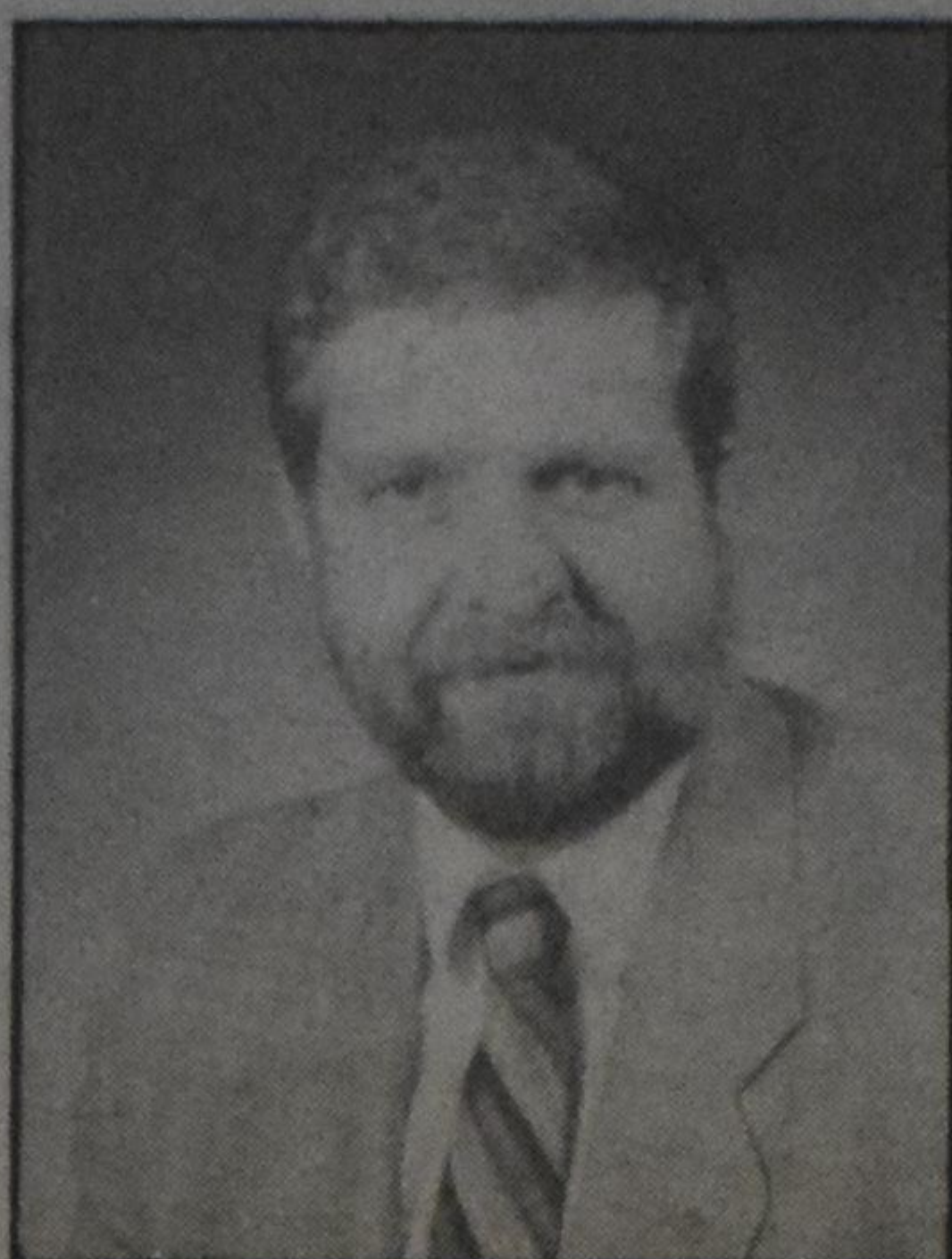
It is striking that in responding to a final question in the poll, 74 per cent said they

no longer feared attack by the United States or its allies. Again there was a clear difference of opinion by age: older people tended to be cautious about dismissing the threat of attack, while younger respondents were impatient that such a foolish question was even asked.

The poll was conducted by telephone in January and responses were obtained from 943 Moscow residents. Ninety per cent were ethnic Russian and the others were minority groups, including Jews and Ukrainians. Questions about the practice of religion were not asked in the poll.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken.



How does your Christian school view the handicapped?

Recently a group of special people accompanied by some friends sang in our church during the evening service. Their selection of songs included: "Thank you Lord," "Call My Name," and "Open Your Heart to Jesus." Their group is part of a growing local Friendship program begun here some years ago in one of the Christian Reformed churches as part of its outreach to a group of people who for too long have been forgotten, ignored or even hidden away in institutions. On this particular evening, rarely heard applause testified loudly to the fact that they had communicated the gospel message from their hearts to a supportive community.

There's a twist however; such support isn't universal in the Christian community. I learned the other day that a Christian school board had refused admission to a child with Down's Syndrome. Not unlike similar refusals in the past, this decision was based on rather flimsy grounds. However, the board which made this decision has lots of company. All across North America schools of all kinds make similar decisions to reject requests for admission to children with disabilities. In other cases individual families are expected to assume the full financial responsibility themselves for providing additional staffing or other resource personnel.

The purpose of telling this story is not to embarrass anyone. However, I do have good reason to believe its telling may contribute enough discomfort to bring about reconsideration of the decision and the policy on which it is based. Rather, the larger purpose is to raise questions about the admission of children with disabilities to Christian schools. This incident has provided the opportunity and the question is: why do Christian schools persist in excluding children with disabilities?

Too many excuses

In this case I was told that funding wasn't available to provide the necessary classroom support. Furthermore, there was also a suggestion that, if the school were to become known for a policy favouring integration it might just be flooded with "... those kinds of

kids." Finally, there was a fear of the possible financial impact of renovations in the event it also became necessary to make the school barrier-free for non-ambulatory children.


Since there are children with significant disabilities who now attend Christian schools with funding from the Alberta government, the suggestion that there is a lack of funding is factually incorrect for private schools in this province. The Child Welfare Act provides the basis and the mechanism for parents to obtain the support services often necessary for effective integration. (Parents in other provinces may want to explore similar possibilities with their provincial child welfare officials.)

The parents of the child with Down's Syndrome were given six reasons for the refusal to admit their child. In summary, four of the reasons dealt primarily with monetary matters and included the lack of special education grants; the lack of funds for a special resource teacher; the financial obligations assumed by some parents for special resource teacher costs; and, the additional costs of integration. The other two reasons dealt with teacher training and an alternate program.


In fairness, I also know of Christian schools who are quite prepared to admit children with disabilities, even if it costs a lot more! Last year for instance, I had the opportunity to assist a family with a blind child in another city obtain government funding for integrating their child in a Christian school. The board of that school, I was told, had already committed itself to accepting the child before a decision was made to provide government funding.

Even though the Friendship choir sang, "Thank You Lord for All of Us" in church, apparently some Christian schools are still not quite so sure. A child-like faith is a prerequisite for claiming the Kingdom's inheritance; it is an affront to that Kingdom to purposefully deprive God's most vulnerable children from their rightful inheritance, namely a Christian education.

Jake Kuiken is a social worker in Calgary who has done extensive work with disabled children.



Association for Christian Education of St. Catharines



Providing Christian education for 260 Christian families in the Niagara Peninsula, the Association for Christian Education invites applications from teachers for the following openings for September, 1989.

Elementary campus on Scott Street grades K-8 requires:

- * **Primary/Kindergarten teacher (half-time)**
- * **Primary and Junior teachers**

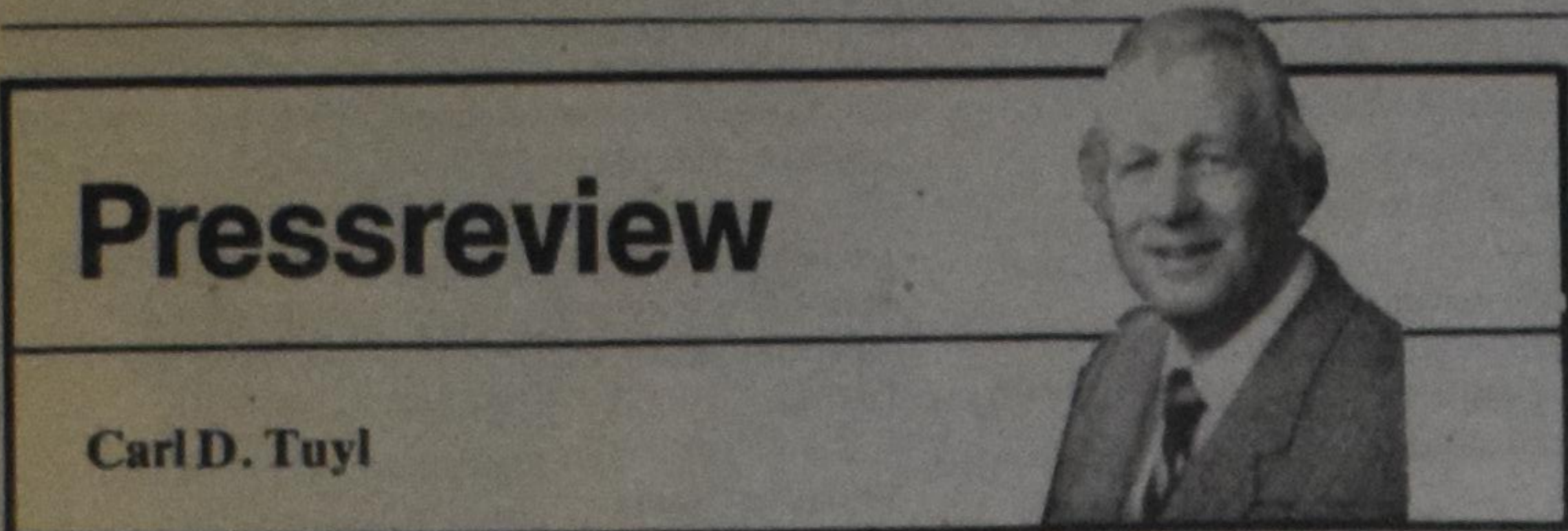
Secondary campus on O'Malley Drive grades 9-12 requires:

- * **Science teacher (chemistry, biology)**

Send applications or inquiries to:

Henry Kater, Principal
Beacon Chr. High School
2 O'Malley Dr.
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 6N7 (416) 937-7411

Jim Vreugdenhil, Principal
Calvin Mem. Chr. School
300 Scott St.
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 1J3 (416) 937-6302



The NDP lost its leader, and the country lost an honest politician. It is too early of course to bring flowers and other tributes, but here is a salute to our own homegrown rosewater socialist: Ed Broadbent. May he wear his corduroy pants again! Corduroy is suitable material for socialists. Corduroy trousers, preferably with red suspenders, seem to be the uniform of solidarity. Three-piece suits do not look good on opponents of capitalism. It is too early for speculations about Ed's successors.

Already the NDP is reconsidering its stance on Meech Lake. Premier Gary Filmon, who had earlier indicated that hearings on Meech were not necessary, has now also changed his mind. An all-party legislative committee will start the hearings. The Meech Lake Accord does not fare well these last weeks. Its opponents are asking for a parallel agreement in which additional concerns would be incorporated.

Premier Bourassa did a little quick two-step dance with his cabinet. He handed Claude Ryan, an earlier rival, the hot language potato. It will be up to Ryan to defend inside-outside Bill 178 when Quebec's National Assembly reconvenes March 14. Bill 178 is like motherhood and apple pie to some, and poison to others. And guess what: there is a debate in France itself about the French language. A teacher's union in France wants

to — hold on to your seat — update the language. It is too *difficile*, they say, and it must be simplified. They advocate, for instance, to say "adieux" to the "x" at the end of that word. Well you see it again: nothing is sacred anymore. People here in Kingston have already long ago simplified Hotel Dieu to Hotel Doo. But teachers? French teachers at that? *Diantre!*

Charlie Francis who taught people to run faster than other people, told the Dubin inquiry that he advocated the use of steroids. Looking at the bodies of some of those guys and dolls I always thought that they did not get that shape by serving tea every afternoon to their grandmothers. The inquiry is getting a lot of international attention, and a lot of gullible people all over the world experience sudden disillusion.

Canadians are dumping their Canada Savings Bonds at an alarming rate. They want higher rates of interest on other investments. Questionable patriotism, but good economics! Why do we always have to make these difficult decisions? Poor Michael Wilson has to cough up a lot of dough to people who call his loans.

Monsieur paid off on an IOU in the past week when he — by mouth of Science Minister Harvie Andre — announced that the Canadian peace agency would be located in Montreal. Premier Bourassa's "on veut

notre butin" (we want our loot) will go down in Canadian history as the most unabashed and coarse expression of ugly political reality.

Long live the free trade agreement! The U.S. Department of Commerce hit the Sydney Steel Corp. in Nova Scotia with a double-whammy, heavy-duty levy on their steel rails. Stay a while, pretty please, Mr. Broadbent.

And Jeanne Sauve will continue to serve as Canada's governor-general until 1990. Her five-year term was to have ended in May this year. Applications are still received at 24 Sussex Dr., Ottawa.

A pilot of a Greek jet went to work on his pocket calculator and found that his plane was too heavy for take-off. He then very politely requested a few of the more corpulent passengers to kindly exit. The passengers began to estimate each other's dimensions, and I presume they came to their conclusions after weighty debate. The plane then executed its flight plan. I am glad I wasn't a passenger on that plane, I could have wound up with my suitcase on the tarmac.

Our bank, and a lot of other banks, as well as the IMF (The International Monetary Fund) have assisted underdeveloped countries with huge loans. They make this weird condition, however, that the loans be repaid. The repayment programs necessitate tough

economic measures. The poor are always hit the hardest, their social programs being shelved with nasty speed. It caused rioting in the streets of Venezuela's capital, Caracas.

Computer freaks broke into U.S. Army files, and if they can do that, who will prevent them from stealing the sermons right off my faithful antique Osborne Executive? They are welcome to them, although they are probably not as valuable on the open market as information about armed forces.

There is a power struggle going on in South Africa. President Botha wants to return to power after he has recuperated from his stroke, but the interim leader, F. W. deKlerk, likes it where he is, and is not planning to return the reigns without a fight. Power, even if held for a few months, corrupts.

Pakistani prime minister Madame Bhutto made a sensible comment on the world-wide Satanic Verses idiocy. "Perhaps," she said, "it would have been more appropriate to ignore such a book" We need more clear-thinking women in office.

The Russians have proposed a reduction of conventional forces in Europe. They are willing to sacrifice tanks for T-bone steaks, which is a crude way of saying that economic considerations are at least partly a factor in all that olive branch waving. Hitler wanted guns rather than butter, the

Russians would like to try butter for a change. Or toilet paper! The Russian submarine fleet has left North American and Western European waters.

Remember the Lockheed scandal? If you do, you're getting on, for it happened in 1976. The Lockheed corporation bribed some very prominent people into preferring their planes. It cost Dutch Prince Bernard his job in the army. Anyway, one of the Japanese government people involved in that scandal was the former prime minister Kakuei Tanaka. His case, which has kept some lawyers in petty cash and then some, is still before the court.

Wisdom does not reside exclusively in the hallowed halls of the academy, or in the hallowed study rooms of *dominees*. It can be found in quite unexpected places. J. R. Colombo knew about this sign in a Chinese restaurant in Bracebridge, Ont.

You ask for credit
I give.
You no pay
I am mad.

You ask for credit
I no give
You are mad.

Better you are mad.

Not only a lot of wisdom in that Confusian saying, it also promotes good health.

Carl Tuyl is pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church of Kingston, Ont.

Canadian students win Calvin scholarships

C.C. staff
GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Calvin College has announced that a number of Canadian students have received scholarship awards for the current academic year. One of the top awards, the Presidential Scholarship, was won by Vincent Elgersma of Red Deer, Alberta, and by the following Ontario students: Monique Groot of Bath, Peter Teertstra of Carrying Place, Emily Dykstra of Chatham, John VanWeeren of London, and Jennifer VanLeeuwen of Toronto. Faculty Honors Scholarships were given to Helen VanMilligen of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, John LaGrand of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Ontario students David DenHaan of Guelph, Laurie Hiemstra of Scarborough, Karen Vreugdenhil of St. Catharines,

Emily Riepma of Thamesville, and Norman Vandervelde of Willowdale. Canadian students who received college Honor Scholarships were all from Ontario: Heather Roukema of Hamilton, Christina DeJong of Jordan Station, John Middeljans of Kitchener, Marjorie Streefkerk of Orangeville, Arie Rignalda of Orillia, Christine Vanderkloet of Rexdale, Kevin VanderMeulen of Sarnia, Laura Elzinga of Smithville, Allan Lammers of St. Catharines, Esther Hart of Toronto, and Jonathan Vandervelde of Willowdale. Academic Achievement Awards were earned by Helen VanMilligen of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, and Ontario students Kevin VanderMeulen of Sarnia, Karen Vreugdenhil of St. Catharines, Esther Hart of Toronto and Norman

Vandervelde of Willowdale. Several named and departmental scholarships were awarded to Canadian students, too. John VanWeeren of London, Ontario, received a Calvin Alumni Association Scholarship. Jonathan Vandervelde of Willowdale, Ontario, was awarded the Sandra Bowden Art Scholarship, and his brother Norman was awarded a Stephenson Foundation Scholarship. Emily Dykstra of Chatham, Ontario, was given one of the George J. VanWesep Scholarships, and Laura Elzinga of Smithville, Ontario, was given a Victor R. VerMeulen, Jr., Nursing Scholarship. Marlene Schaly of Burnstown, Ontario, received the Pat Snyder Verduin Art Scholarship.

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An independent Christian weekly that seeks to proclaim the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ.

Editorial

You don't have to like me; just love me

I read in the Bible that God loves all people. Never mind what anyone says about limited atonement, a doctrine which correctly observes that not all people accept the offer of love or that some put themselves in dire situations in which it is impossible for them to love God. I still say that God loves all people. God loves them well enough that he wants everyone to be saved.

But something in me asks the question whether God *likes* all people. I suspect that he does not. In fact, I even doubt whether he likes all Christians.

If I consider myself, I would have to say that there are quite a few Christians I don't like. And there must be even more Christians who don't like me. In fact, there are some non-Christians whom I like a whole lot better than some Christians.

Of course, I'm putting it in rather absolute terms now. Quite often it's not the whole person I dislike, but certain traits in that person. If these traits are numerous enough or strong enough, the needle may swing over into negative charge, and I end up saying that I dislike the person as a whole.

Now, that shouldn't bother anyone. No command is being violated by not liking a person. All "not liking" means is that you don't feel comfortable with the person and that you don't find him or her nice to be with. It usually also means that the other person does not like you. Liking is a very mutual thing. I suppose it means that people who like each other fit each other.

Romantic fever

In fact, I have a theory that romantic love is not so much love as a heightened state of liking. It's an illness that sometimes afflicts people with blindness. "The problem with falling in love," one professor of psychology used to say to his college class, "is that you have to get up again later." That's a fairly cynical view of what God probably intended as a wonderful prelude to a happy marriage. There's nothing wrong with liking someone to the point at which your heart begins to flutter and your arms sprout wings.

Sometimes marriages break down because one partner no longer likes the other partner. That's a real problem. It's terribly difficult to live intimately with a person you don't like. In the long run, it's impossible. How can it be that people who liked each other so much at one time end up disliking each other? It may be a matter of betrayal by one or both. Unless there was a drastic change in one of the partners, it usually means that the two wore blinders when they married each other. Once those blinders fall away, pray that there be something left to like, or else the marriage is doomed.

Liking carries the idea of being similar to each other, at least in mind. Anne of Green Gables sees herself and her teacher and classmate as being "kindred spirits." The word *kindred* has to do with being of the same kind. Maybe God has a hard time liking most of us because we are not very much like him anymore. Our image has gotten smeared or twisted. We are not always kindred spirits with him.

Saturday scrubbing

Fortunately for us, God loves us. And love goes a lot further and deeper than liking. Liking is very much geared to the present state, whereas love is willing to suspend judgment and hope for the future. In fact, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Being a sinner is a very unlikable condition. Sin makes us ugly. But Christ wades right through that ugliness and offers us his love.

But the intent of his act of salvation is to make us more like him, more likeable to him. For that we need a good scrubbing, to be sure, an even more thorough scrubbing than we used to get as kids

on Saturday nights when Mom applied the brush and the soft soap we knew as "griene sjippe." The end product will be that God not only loves us, but he will like us as well.

I honestly believe that the time will come on the new earth that we will like everybody in sight, even those we would rather not associate with now.

In the meantime, we are called to love each other. What that means in the face of those we don't like very much, I Corinthians 13 spells out rather clearly — looooooong suffering and an incredible amount of hope that some day these miserable so and sos will finally smarten up, as we miserable misfits with God and neighbour also finally get *our* act together.

BW

All fools return to their folly

A young woman was interviewed on radio about her loss of hearing. Being a member of a rock band, she had been exposed to loud music for too long a period of time. The resulting deafness she described as a sensation that resembled having permanent plugs in one's ears.

The interviewer wondered whether this experience should not send a message to others that contemporary rock and heavy metal is often too loud. He suggested that an attempt ought to be made to reduce the sound level. The young woman disagreed. She believed in the freedom of artistic expression, she said. She thought that a solution might be to make earplugs available at concerts.

"Wouldn't it make more sense to turn down the volume?" the interviewer came back. The young woman did not think so. We have safe sex today, she said, without a catch in her voice. (She probably did not blink an eye either, but radios don't tell you those things.) If we can have safe sex, we should be able to have safe music too, she thought.

Ignoring the signs

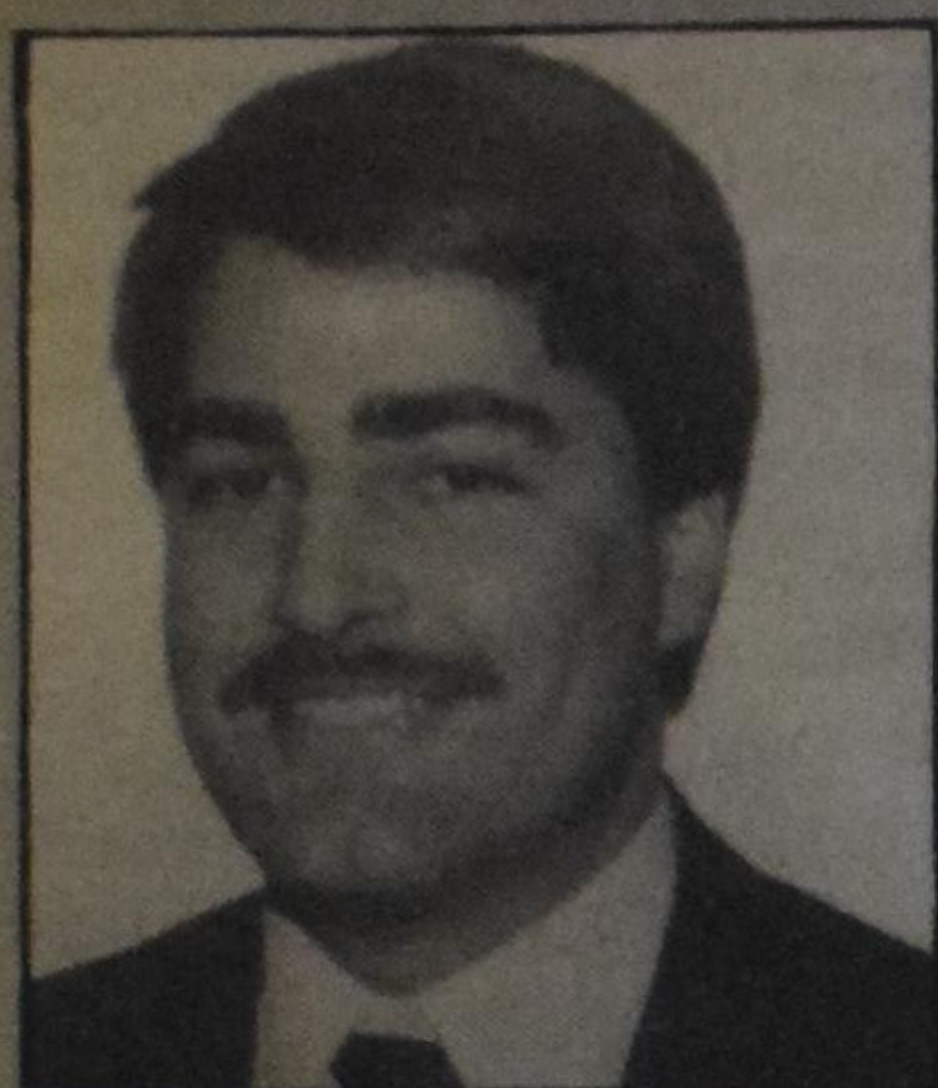
Safe music and safe sex, indeed. What she meant was that one should be able to do something harmful without having to pay the price. Ridiculous, isn't it? It would be laughable if it weren't so pathetic. The problem is that this young woman's attempt to ignore the message of her own deafness resembles our tendency to ignore the signs of our own foolish habits.

By looking at our own lives and our own circles one would think that there were such things as safe overeating and safe smoking. Or what about safe careless driving and safe neglecting your kids? Anyone for safe cheating or safe losing your temper? Then there is safe alcoholism, safe gossiping, safe materialism, safe polluting the environment, safe putting down your spouse, safe building a wall around yourself, safe judging someone who thinks differently, safe producing inferior work, safe watching garbage television or movies, safe hanging out with the wrong crowd. One can go on and on with examples of how we fool ourselves about the consequences of our foolishness.

Most of us get plenty of signs telling us that there is no such thing as safe folly. But like the young woman with a hearing loss that will probably get much worse as she gets older, we treat the symptoms, not the disease. The result is that our lives become one great big joke, but at our expense and at the expense of those around us.

BW

FETISHES/DAVE FEDDES



The brew zone

"Nations and communities that drink [alcoholic beverages] only at the dinner table and do not tolerate public drunkenness do not have high rates of alcoholism." So writes Anderson Spickard, a leading authority on alcohol and drug abuse, in his book *Dying for a Drink*. "What separates cultures with high rates of alcoholism from those with low rates?" asks Spickard. "The two most important factors are attitudes toward public drunkenness and whether or not drinking takes place outside of meals."

If Spickard is correct, Canada is a breeding ground for alcoholism. Canadians would rather have a party with some drunkenness than a party without booze. Individual Christians often conform to our culture's irresponsible drinking patterns. Even if most of us will not personally become alcoholics, we are part of an atmosphere which breeds alcoholism.

This is not only true in the individual lives of church members, but is also apparent at functions officially linked with the church. Many church weddings are immediately followed by a celebration which duplicates as nearly as possible the atmosphere of a typical weekend at the bar.

Not our problem?

Interesting indeed are the arguments I have heard in favour of a bar at wedding celebrations. From the very same persons come two claims: First, we have guests with drinking problems. Second, if we do not host a bar, some of the guests (who have no drinking problem?) will bring their own booze and drink in the parking lot.

There are even those who know of drinking problems among family or friends yet insist that a bar is an essential part of a wedding celebration. After all, that one night is not going to make or break an alcoholic. Each person must take responsibility for him- or herself. (Am I my brother's keeper?) All those highway deaths, ruined homes, and lost jobs — they're really too bad. But that has nothing to do with us or the patterns of drinking that our Christian weddings exemplify.

If Spickard is correct, then celebrations which move drinking from the meal to the dance floor contribute to a devastating cultural pattern. The church conforms to the world; we giggle when someone else "has a little too much." And we are offended when someone suggests that these "harmless" attitudes and actions mean that we are contributing to our culture's chemical dependency.

The Christian Reformed Synod of 1986 adopted an important report on the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs. That report deserves wide reading. Don't miss this paragraph: "If alcoholic beverages are served at wedding parties they should be *limited to the toast* at dinner. It is unwise to serve anything more at such gatherings, both from a legal and moral perspective. There are usually too many people to supervise at such a gathering. Under no circumstances should the host provide an open bar. He is courting disaster if he does. He would undoubtedly be contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and might unlovingly be placing a serious temptation before a recovering alcoholic."

Christians are called to recognize the problems of our culture and to discern the patterns which spawn the problems. We must then act to *transform* rather than conform. Churches and pastors must be ready to provide godly leadership. We serve as those who will have to give account to God. Perhaps more of us ought to stop wringing our hands about alcohol abuse and be prepared to shake our heads "no" to couples who refuse to follow responsible guidelines for wedding celebrations, and thus contribute to the destructive pattern of our culture.

Alcohol abuse would destroy the church — if it could. The church could reduce alcohol abuse — if it would.

Dave Feddes is pastor of Westmount Christian Reformed Church, Strathroy, Ont.

Longer Letter

Prefers New Testament worship

Welcome back, Mr. Rang, to the rank of contributors to *Calvinist Contact*. We missed your articles.

Thank you for your article in C.C. of Feb. 10, 1989, entitled "He is holy." This gives us an opportunity to discuss one of the underlying problems in many Christian Reformed churches today. We need to ask: "What are the biblical guidelines for worship in the New Testament age?"

The introduction to Mr. Rang's article states: "Church services are slowly-on changing from God meeting with his people to people who meet to feel good about themselves." I am not sure whether the latter part of that statement is accurate or an assumption.

I am not a scholar nor a theologian, but I do not believe that the traditional way of worship as longed for in Mr. Rang's article is scriptural in its totality. Some aspects of it, "yes," others, "no."

The way the worship service is described in the article is more like that of Old Testament Israel going to the temple. All the references are taken from the O.T. It leaves the impression that because "he is holy" God is also still unapproachable, like Moses and the burning bush. My understanding has always been that, since Christ came to reconcile us with the Father, he made him approachable again, as symbolized by the torn curtain in the temple. Like Adam, we can walk and talk with God as we move about in the "garden" in which he has placed us.

Anticipate joy

What then should our attitude be as we meet for worship? First, we must prepare ourselves for worship, as we would going to a wedding feast. That is how Jesus describes our meeting with him and the Father. We dress properly and our minds should be receptive to hearing the Word.

But we should also anticipate a joyful experience, because we are gathering to celebrate what Jesus has done for us,

reconciliation with the Father. That is something worth celebrating.

So, in a way, we do come together to feel good about ourselves, we, who have been born again, who have received a new life. It is a very happy occasion, just like celebrating the birth of a new child.

Our coming together should also be a foretaste of eternal life with the Father. Many of our worship services do not leave this impression; and, therefore, many people object to the length of some of the worship services, especially if they are constantly reminded of how sinful they are.

But if we are "having fun" as we are meeting with our Father, then time will be irrelevant, and maybe more will attend the second service as well. How can we long for eternity with our Father if our worship services are not a foretaste of that experience?

Feeling good

Besides listening to what God has to say to us, we are also called "to encourage one another," (Heb. 10:25), to "speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. 5:19, 20)

And yes, then we may feel good about ourselves, as it applies to our relationship with God.

"But you who revere my name will go out and leap like calves released from the stall." (Mal. 4:2) Not just released into a fenced coral, but into the wide open spaces, although still fenced-in.

"Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise." (Ps. 100:2, 4)

I hope others will express their views and their interpretation of scripture on this matter, as I think it to be crucial to the life and well-being of God's church.

John A. Jonker
Redcliff, Alta.

Let our voices be heard

We would like to make a few comments on Mr. Rang's "Skylights" of Feb. 10, 1989.

Mr. Rang wants to come to church mainly to listen. He quotes Psalm 46:10 and then goes on to state his personal reasons for wanting to be quiet in church.

But don't we also come to church to worship God? When we read Psalm 95, 100 and 150, we actually are required to make our voices heard in praise to God, along with musical instruments.

Worship is a giving of ourselves in praise to God, so that our faith becomes visible to those around us, especially

children and the uncommitted.

Yes, worship also involves listening to what God has to say to us. When listening to the preaching and praising are both centred around the Word, our worship services truly become a feast. We'll go home, filled with the Word, equipped for service in God's Kingdom.

Case & Jenny Bruulsema
Ancaster, Ont.

More letters on page 6

Wants to hear more

I read the article on "Managing cows" by Clarence Joldersma.

As a dairy farmer I want to stay as close as possible to "Mother Nature." How can we do that? Very little information is given on this subject, and your paper has said very little on it, but IT'S A START!

Is there more information available? I am looking forward to hearing from anyone who has information.

Address: Box 115, Witon Junction, AB T0E 1S0.

Also, in the same issue, on page 16, there is an article called "Animals are struggling." It's good to know that people are beginning to realize this. You

don't hear this very often.

Dick Andringa
Witon Junction, Alta.



Letters

A place in the Christian school

We just finished reading the March 3 issue of *Calvinist Contact* and want to thank and congratulate you on bringing to the foreground again the issue of educating the "handicapped" children in our communities. The question which still remains poignant and real in many of our Christian school communities is whether there is truly a place within our Christian schools for *all* handicapped children.

It was heart-warming to read Wendy's affirmation that, yes, all our children do belong in the Christian schools, and to be reminded of what true integration means; i.e. "How does real integration work?" In many ways her words are echoes of our own. We have spent much time talking, thinking and praying about

what is best for our handicapped son.

Biblical themes

Over the past year, after listening to Marsha Forest for a day and Jim Hansen (Hamilton-Wentworth Separate School Board) for an evening, we were again frustrated by the fact that for Joel an integrated and Christian setting is not yet a reality.

All the basic principles behind the integrative model could have been taken directly from biblical directives. The concern for community and interaction, the basic strategies for support, and the need for love and acceptance for ALL children are all very much biblical themes. It is ironic that it takes a Marsha Forest to remind us of those biblical

truths.

Some people point to the tremendous cost of accepting the more "demanding" handicapped children into our Christian school settings. We remain convinced, however, that when the commitment is there and the school makes a definite decision to accept ALL children into their classrooms, then the Lord and the supporting community will take on the challenge.

We encourage all our Christian school communities to make these kind of commitments and decisions. As Jim Hansen pointed out: "to do any less is disobedience." As Marsha Forest points out: the issue of integration "is not whether or not, but how."

As a Christian educator, I challenge all teachers, administrators, education committees and school boards

to make a commitment to serve all our covenant children. It will require some careful planning and, in some cases, a change in attitude; but it cannot be left on the back burner.

Everyone benefits

Something that both Jim Hansen and Marsha Forest pointed out has always remained in the foreground for us: when we segregate our handicapped children behind the walls of the segregated classrooms, we are depriving not just the handicapped, but all children, of the opportunity to interact with each other.

As parents, we have learned long ago that a handicapped son has so much to offer us "normal" people. They are very much individuals whom God also uses to carry out his work and to speak to the rest of us. They are individuals who

also thrive on being a true part of their Christian community. We see that every Sunday when Joel looks forward to going to the regular Sunday school class. He's part of that community. He belongs and he knows it.

We know he belongs in the Christian school community too. We sometimes wonder if he does. Joel is at present attending a "segregated" public school program with a very loving teacher but in a very rigid system.

Do you think children like him belong in the Christian school? If you do, and your school community has not as yet made this a reality, do your part and encourage it. We and other parents of handicapped children will appreciate your support.

**Harry and Evelyn Pott
Strathroy, Ont.**

Integration requires commitment

We read with interest your special edition "The Christian school and the handicapped child." We have a six-year-old daughter with spina-bifida who gets around in a wheelchair and uses a "standing brace" for walking in limited areas. At school she requires an aid to keep up in physical activities and toileting. As she grows more independent this support will gradually decrease.

Last year we sent our daughter to a Christian school in the area. The school could not provide any special services, but we thought we could cope as she would only be there half days. Within one year we all saw her happiness and drive for independence disintegrate. The cost of her well-being and the strain on the

family was too great. Requests for some help in assisting her to keep up in physical activities could not be granted. The financial commitment on the school's behalf would be too great.

Regretfully we had to withdraw our child from that school and enrol her in the local public school. Within six months she has regained her positive attitude and is happily working her way to independence. The stress on the family has been greatly reduced.

We miss the fellowship which a Christian school provides, especially within the circle of Christian home, church and school. No doubt, we will have our struggles that come with an education that is

not God-centred, but we have to trust that God will give us the wisdom and guidance to teach our children to serve him in all areas of life.

As much as we would like to have our daughter attend a Christian school, successful integration cannot happen unless the school boards, staff and school society are wholly committed to this ideal. Integration requires sacrifice of time and money not only on the parents' part.

When we show our love to those with special needs and support them in all phases of their lives, we can then experience a richness of life that God provides.

**Nellie and John Bos
Nepean, Ont.**

Long time of writing ahead

Although I don't always agree with what Rev. Schalkwyk writes, it's good that he returned to the pages of *Calvinist Contact*. He may have been under the impression that the editor was the only one reading his articles, but that's not so.

What should make him feel even better is the fact that some people keep some of his articles in their desk drawer. For example, I have in front of me the article he wrote in *Calvinist Contact* of July 10, 1981 —

"The most wonderful job on earth." That's of course the minister's job, if you can call it that. Allow me to say that I sell insurance. If I don't like a client, I can say goodbye to him or her. A minister can't, and has to deal with his flock till the bitter end.

In closing I'll reprint what I wrote in the church bulletin of the Immanuel church in Hamilton under the "clerk's corner," December 5, 1982.

"Last year Rev. Schalkwyk wrote in C.C. about the

ministry, calling it the 'most wonderful job on earth.' He added that it was a strain-related occupation, and a pastor should have the hide of an elephant, and be patient as a lamb. We are inclined to go along with that statement.

But, notwithstanding the strain and the pain, he should have mentioned that ministers can look forward to a long, long life. Insurance statistics

show that bartenders hardly make it to 58, lawyers and doctors reach 68, farmers an average of 71, but ministers live to the ripe old age of 77, which gives them many years of golfing and gardening."

I wish that Rev. Schalkwyk may have a long and happy life, and that he may keep on writing.

**Klaas Terpstra
Hamilton, Ont.**

Non-glossy pages shine

My coffee table looks unusually bare for a change! I've just gone through a one-hour snipping and cutting stint with a number of magazines — including a heaping pile of *Calvinist Contacts*.

What "gems" there are between the lines of this Christian weekly! Those pages shine and they aren't even glossy!

I had a good laugh over that letter that hailed from Ja-Ville,

Ontario! It was just another one of many "classics," that I've stuffed into a bulging four-drawer filing cabinet. Ask me if it's possible to get six drawers worth, packed into four!

I also really appreciated the Feb. 3 feature on John Terpstra.

Hats off for the work that you do at Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.!

**Tine G. Buma
Brantford, Ont.**



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Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Lean on Me

Rated PG

Stars Morgan Freeman, Beverly Todd, Robert Guillaume
Directed by John G. Avildsen

Lean on Me was just released but already it is causing controversy. A film about "Crazy Joe" Clark, the outspoken black principal of Patterson, New Jersey's Eastside High School, who last year appeared on the cover of *Time* and was the subject of a *60 Minutes* report, could hardly avoid generating heat.

This movie's subject is "the true story" of Clark's transformation of a dangerous, overcrowded, drug-infested school in a decaying city next door to New York, to an orderly, safe place in which students take pride and where learning can happen.

Eastside students' basic skills test scores had been hovering at an abysmal 38 per cent (the New Jersey average is 75 per cent) when the state decided it would take over the school if things weren't turned around. Joe Clark was hired to do that, though nobody really thought it would happen.

Lean on Me is mesmerizing; too much so, say Clark's critics, some of whom are other educators and city council members. It exaggerates the problems and what Clark has done for the school, they say; and it downplays Clark's autocratic methods.

For a time, Clark chained school doors shut to keep out dope dealers; he has expelled vast numbers of students — 300 of them shortly after he arrived — because they were "hoodlums, thugs, miscreants, drug dealers, leeches." He both cajoles and berates. In one scene, Clark takes a 14-year-old drug user whom he has expelled onto the school's roof. Clark urges him to jump; the student doesn't understand. "You use crack, don't you?" Clark asks. "Do you know what that stuff does to you? It kills your brain cells; it's killing you. You must have decided you want to die; you're doing it slowly. Why don't you jump and get it over with?" The student gets the point.

Clark's students and many parents and community leaders give high marks to the movie and the man. He cares, they say, and his tough tactics and say-it-like-it-is talk have been what was needed to clean up a horrendous mess. (Clark admits he didn't get where he is by keeping his mouth shut.)

Some deplore his tactics but few doubt Clark's commitment. He has tried to foster attitudes in Eastside's 3,500 mostly black and Hispanic students which cause them to own up to their own failures — and successes. "Don't blame your parents, don't blame the white world when you screw up. What you do with your life is your responsibility," he preaches.

Though the film to some extent fictionalizes the story and compresses six years into one explosive year, it doesn't whitewash Clark as his opponents insist. Director Avildsen and actor Morgan Freeman spent six weeks at Eastside and elsewhere following Clark around, seeing him in all circumstances. In the end, we get a picture of a complex man who can be alternately compassionate and insensitive, thoughtful and egotistical; a fiery personality who wants things done his way; a blunt man whose honesty is a strength and a liability. The film can be faulted, however, for caricaturing Clark's opponents, some of whose concerns are legitimate.

While one could argue about how closely the film sticks to real-life details, that's not really the point as long as film reality does not degenerate or twist existential reality. (This happened, it can be argued, in *Mississippi Burning* and *The Last Temptation*). This film avoids that.

Judging it on elements such as: how it presents its plot, whether it is realistic within the world it has created for itself, how it builds and releases dramatic tension, how well-acted it is, whether camera angles are well-chosen, and whether its musical score enhances the whole, *Lean on Me* can be termed a success. Dramatically it is enveloping and provides a believable picture — poignant, humorous, gritty — of this inner city school and its inhabitants. The music soundtrack is exceptional. It not only enhances the atmosphere but adds sung commentary on the story.

Viewing and discussing *Lean on Me* with young people will be a valuable and enjoyable exercise.



small talk

Alice Los

Follow all the steps of Jesus' life

Quick now, do you know when Easter is? And if so, is it because you are also acutely aware of Lent? Then, I'm afraid, you are an exception in this world and in the Christian church.

Of course all of us knew long before last Christmas that that holiday would be on Sunday, December 25. But Easter?! First of all, it tends to jump all over the calendar; and then, what's out there to remind us of its coming, apart from candy counters garishly stocked with eggs and bunnies? There's not an Easter hymn to be heard in any department store or to hum along with on the radio.

It's the March break which gets all the attention. Many of us may also still be plotting a last-minute escape from this frozen land to warmer shores. Spring still seems a long way off and we tend to associate Easter with a change in the weather, with soil that starts to feel springy under our feet again and with a soft breeze which carries the smells of reviving vegetation.

The church also, in general, seems to be on better terms with Advent than it is with Lent. During Advent there's the weekly lighting of the candles on the wreath and an air of anticipation which grows thicker all through December. By comparison, Lent fares poorly as a time of sober reflection in most communities of believers that I know, and the undercurrent of joy because of the coming Easter day is often hard to detect.

No big deal?

Some five weeks later, the Ascension Day service in most Reformed churches rates a

meager attendance of people who have a hard time explaining to their neighbours and co-workers why they are going to church on a weekday night. Frankly, they may not have been so sure themselves. Then Pentecost, which doesn't even make it on many calendars, ends the church's season of special commemorations and it, too, is in danger of neglect. As there was on Easter Sunday, there may be an air of festivity in some Reformed congregations because another class of young baptized members will publicly confess their faith in Jesus Christ, a breathtaking event indeed! God keeps his church alive!

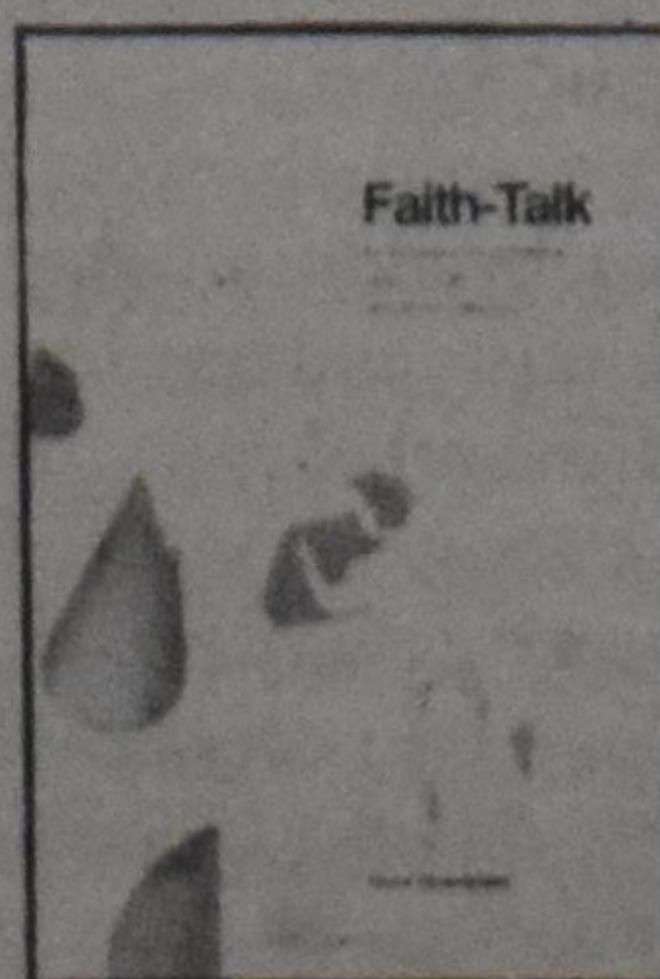
But will there also be a general preoccupation with the work and power of the Holy Spirit? Not only in the pulpit, but also in the pew and on the parking lot? At times it seems to me that the church remembers the birth of Christ so well and so exuberantly because it is egged on by the prevailing secular mood. At Easter and on all other religiously significant occasions the church has to go it alone; it is the odd one out. That shouldn't make any difference of course. The preoccupation of the redeemed should be with their Redeemer, their Lover, at all times.

Therefore, we should remember the different and progressively more profound steps he undertook for our salvation. And as we do so faithfully, again and again, we eagerly anticipate his final step, the day of his return. Then, our preoccupation will be pure and unhindered forever and ever.

Have a richly relevant Easter!

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ontario.

The Fifth Battalion "Prinses Irene" plans to have a big reunion in **September 1990**. We may organize something in Canada (reunion) or travel together. Please contact:
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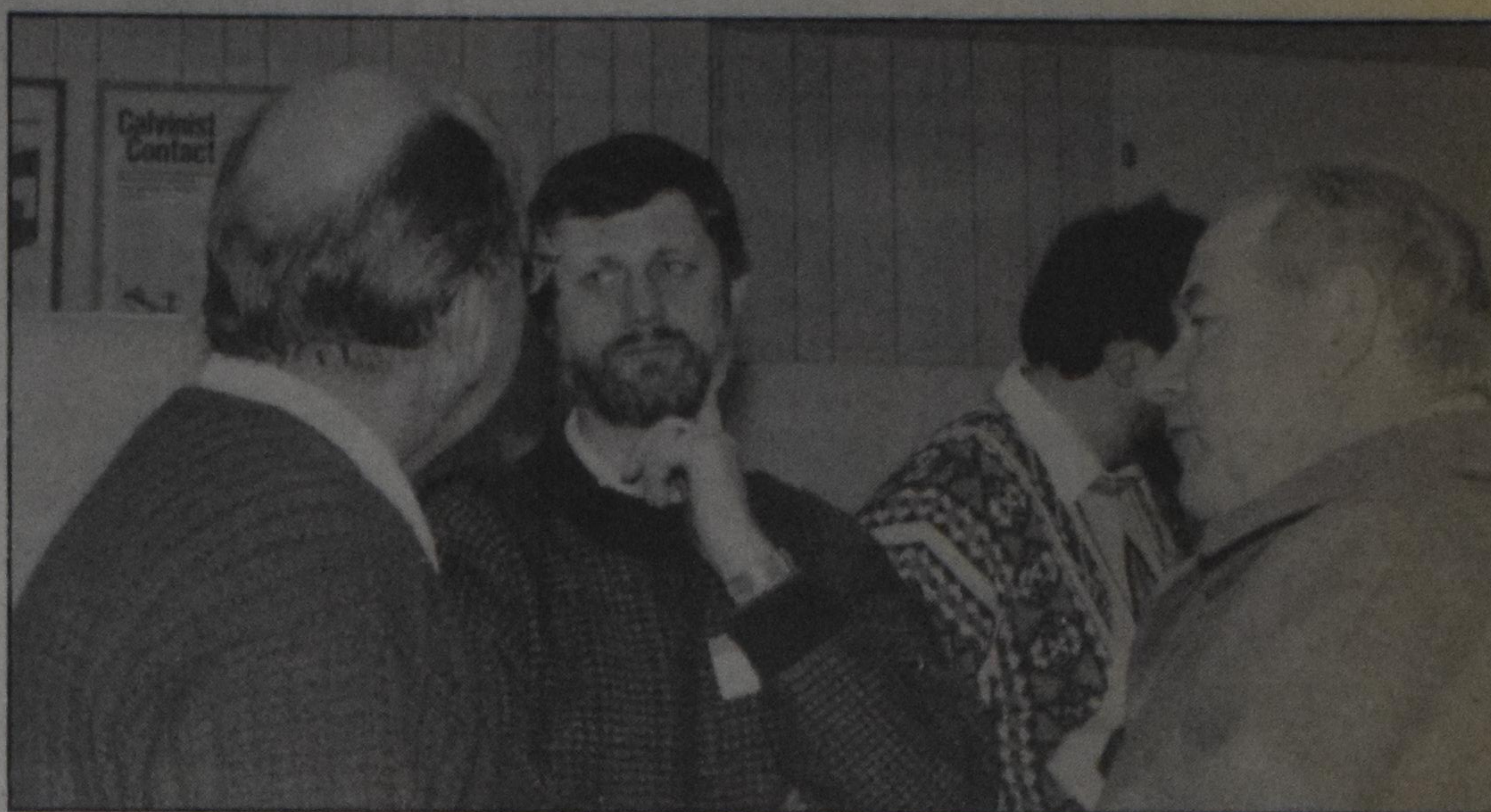
Report on Wednesday evening meeting

On Wednesday evening, Feb. 22, some 40 *Calvinist Contact* writers, board members and their spouses met in the C.C. office for an evening of discussion of the question: What kind of times are we living in, and what should *Calvinist Contact* be doing?

Many of us felt it would be a good thing to share some of that discussion with C.C. readers. For that reason we are using space on three pages of this issue to print Bob VanderVennen's report on the Wednesday evening meeting and on the board meeting of the following day. We are also printing the speeches of Ed Vanderkloet and Bert Witvoet, as well as a transcript of notes on Hugh Cook's presentation.

We hope you will think along with us as we head into the last decade of the 20th century, continuing our journalistic journey under the banner of faith, hope and love.

BW



Columnist Herman de Jong (l) engages speaker Hugh Cook (c) and board member Jacob Kuntz at the Wednesday evening

Robert VanderVennen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Steps were taken at the recent annual meeting of the editorial advisory board of *Calvinist Contact* to set up a charitable foundation to promote Christian journalism and to provide a stronger financial base for this weekly Christian newspaper.

The aim of the foundation, in addition to serving this newspaper, will be to contribute to fundamental thinking about Christian journalism, to consider providing scholarships to promising Christians who wish to study journalism, and to develop a Christian news service in Canada from a Reformed perspective.

Financial assistance for *Calvinist Contact* is important because, by its nature, a paper like this cannot provide from operating revenues the research and writing staff that is needed. Although the paper has a solid subscription base and substantial advertising support, those are enough only to provide a skeleton writing staff.

At present the only in-house writers are editor Bert Witvoet and assistant editors Marian Van Til (who works three days a week) and Robert VanderVennen (who works two days). In addition, there are columnists and regular writers from other cities, of course. A foundation which is able to receive charitable donations is the only feasible way to provide more income, since the paper is set up as a business corporation rather than as a nonprofit organization.

In other actions, the board, chaired by Sam Da Silva, heard a favourable report on the

review of Bert Witvoet's service after five years as editor, and discussed the plan for discontinuing the use of the Dutch language in the paper. (Board members come from across Canada. Their names appear on the masthead on page 4.)

On the evening of Feb. 22, before the annual board meeting, the staff, board and columnists within commuting distance (with spouses) — some 40 people altogether — came to the C.C. office to brainstorm about how the paper can best serve readers in the 1990s. Three short presentations were given and, under the chairmanship of Judy Knoops, there was good discussion and fellowship.

Diversity rooted in spiritual oneness

Ed Vanderkloet, executive secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada, presented a talk on unity. He reflected on how unity and disunity have been expressed in past years in the Christian community served by C.C. He said that we should not fear disagreement but that diversity of opinion must rest on unconditional allegiance to Jesus Christ. Vanderkloet concluded with the thought that we must try to wrestle to the ground the spirits of this age, but in doing so we must remember that of first importance are not our successes and failures but what Jesus says in Luke 10:20: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Hugh Cook, professor of English at Redeemer College, reflected on the leadership expected of the paper as it helps people think about the issues of

the day in church, family and society. He called for a bank of resource people on each of several issues. This is now possible, he said, because the Reformed community at this point includes people with developed insight into social issues, people who hold responsible positions in society.

Bert Witvoet worked with the metaphor of a journey through a landscape. Where the road leads is a *directional* concern. The landscape is life around us with which we must interact. We must also be concerned about the welfare of our fellow travellers. There has been a change of emphasis in recent years from the direction of the pathway to the landscape. For example, the C.C. masthead no longer speaks simply of "the rule of Christ" but of "the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ." Yet we must maintain a clear biblical direction, even though we don't talk about it all the time.

"Tension among us comes when people want to stand still in the familiar landscape," said Witvoet. However, pilgrims also need to rest from time to time, and he wants C.C. to be "an oasis of sanity, an oasis of trust." "Let's have a gentler, courageous Calvinism," he urged.

The meeting was a time of inspiration at which it was clear that it takes many hands to produce a newspaper: writers, editors, production staff, advertisers, advisers, board members — and, of course, readers. It was a time of thanksgiving for 44 years of continuous service — 2154 issues, and counting.

C.C.'s task at three levels

Hugh Cook

The following are notes based on Hugh Cook's presentation at the C.C. discussion evening. Ed.

We are here to ask ourselves what leadership role *Calvinist Contact* ought to play. But with that question come others: leadership for whom? For the Reformed community or for the evangelical community? (We can draw a parallel with the Christian schools among us, which are mostly geared to the larger Reformed community.)

Where is that larger Reformed community at? The last few years we have seen a great deal of polarization. This polarization has tended to focus on the periodicals that have become the voices of various groups.

What image does C.C. have within that community? What segment of the Reformed

community rallies around C.C.? I'm not sure. It isn't a narrow-interest journal. Perhaps the only noticeable boundary is a national one, which may be legitimate. It is not a narrow ideological paper.

How can C.C. best perceive or achieve its mandate? It's more than just a church paper. It works with the Reformed concept of the Kingdom in all its breadth.

Suggestions

It seems that today more issues face us which need answers, more so than in other times. Perhaps *Calvinist Contact* ought to devote extra space to such issues that confront us. Perhaps there ought to be a special issue each month devoted to an issue.

I think that *Calvinist Contact* should operate at three levels: in the Reformed community, the evangelical community, the Canadian community.

On the first level C.C. could explore the following: Where do our Christian schools stand? What are the dangers that threaten Reformed families? What contribution can we make to Canadian political life? What is a Reformed witness in labour? How can we confront the Reformed church as church?

On the second level we should ask how we can be more effective as Christians in such matters as the abortion dilemma, higher education and world relief.

On the third level, C.C. can address national issues such as the environment, a just

immigration policy, the role of industry, the cultural industry, affordable housing, regional disparities.

You may well ask where you'll find the people to write authoritatively on these matters. There are such people. We're beyond the time when leadership went largely to the

clergy. Get yourself a databank of resource people who can write for you.

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Church news returns next week

Feature

Neither triumph nor despair

Ed Vanderkloet

Your invitation to address the topic "*Calvinist Contact in transition*" poses a bit of a dilemma for me since I hardly feel qualified to voice an opinion on it. Christians are sojourners by nature and therefore always in transition. Reformed Christians are by confession always reforming. When it comes to details of change, you may count on the interest and approval of many readers, and on the apathy and disapproval of many others, if only because some Reformed folk are never reforming and prefer to sit on their wilted laurels. But I won't speak on that.

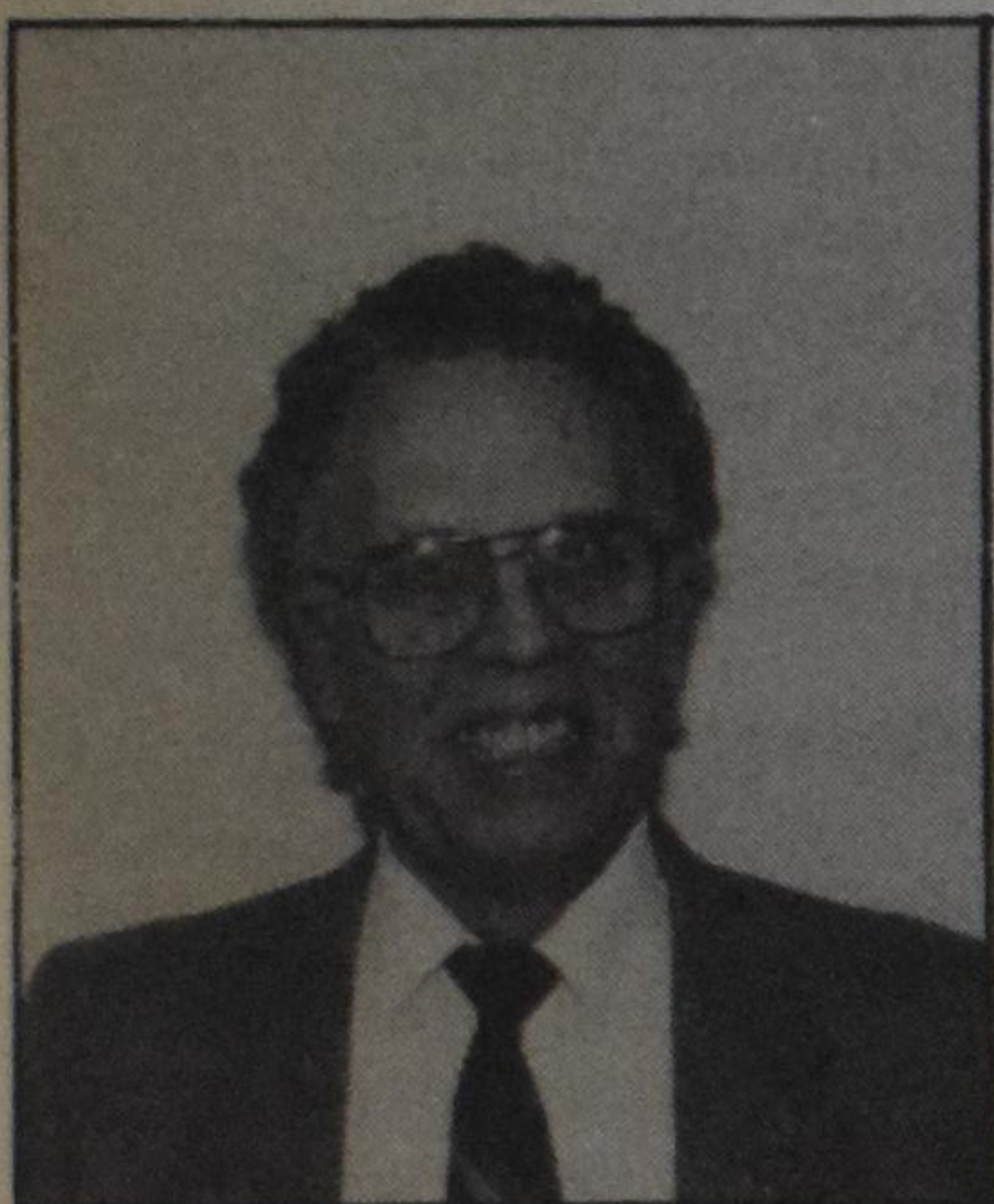


Photo: Bert Witvoet
Ed Vanderkloet.

What I would like to speak about are the schismatic and almost suicidal tendencies today in the Reformed community in Canada, the forces which seek to drive us apart into hostile camps. I don't think I have to elaborate, for we all know what I am talking about.

We are increasingly adopting case-hardened, left-wing or right-wing positions, and from the bunkers and trenches we suspiciously eye every movement of the "enemy" out there. Those of us who dare venture out into no-man's land run the risk of getting caught in the cross fire of angry words and pious-sounding slogans we hurl at each other with such utter conviction.

I have no problem with polemics. There is even a time for anger. But I get uneasy when we publicly cast aspersions, deliberately sow dissension among the faithful and zealously engage in the distribution of hate literature.

A large part of our frustration stems, I believe, from a mistaken notion about unity. I am thinking of the general consensus that prevailed in the Reformed community until about 12 or 15 years ago. This sense of oneness has been shattered, and we all experience a fragmentation that leads to disillusionment and bitterness. It is this bitterness that reveals itself in angry accusations.

Perhaps we should re-examine the validity of that oneness of the past and ask ourselves a few critical questions.

Unity in conformity

In my opinion, the unity of the Reformed community in Canada up until, say, 1975, was a continuation of the Reformed society that existed in the "old country" before World War II.

If you were "Gereformeerd" (Christian Reformed) you also were a member of the Anti-revolutionary Party, you read *De Standaard*, subscribed to the Christian Broadcasting Corporation (NCRV), sent your kids to the Christian school, and (depending on your status as an employee, employer or farmer,) belonged to the Christian labour union, Christian employers' organization, or Christian farmers federation. Yes, there were exceptions, but they only confirmed the rule.

Mutual disagreements were not uncommon, but they were not very public, either. Several CNV leaders were prominent AR people, and favourite speakers at youth rallies were the high-profile politicians in the ranks of the party; also, *De Standaard* was not an independent free press, but a party organ.

The situation was not so surprising if one considers that Abraham Kuyper, the spiritual father of Christian organizations, was himself a powerful theologian, founder of a church, founder of a university, a tireless journalist, political leader, and even prime minister. It was Kuyper who constantly hammered on the theme that the various spheres and structures should be free and independent (from the state, from each other, and from the church). But his magnetic personality served as an example of the unity of all these structures.

With the vision of hindsight we can see that this structure could not last. And it *did* not. Developments since 1946 clearly show that.

Today the Reformed community is experiencing the same development in Canada. We who are Reformed Dutch immigrants should not exaggerate our unity of 30 years ago, something we always tend to do ("good-old-days" syndrome). We too are caught in the swirl of forces that drive us apart. These forces did *not* waft across the ocean, they are not articles we must eye suspiciously because we think they are imported from the old country. No, we must realize that the so-called unity of the immediate post-immigration decades was artificial and rested on feet of clay.

My thesis today is that all this should not unduly worry us.

We will indeed be one in the Spirit and one in the Lord, but not necessarily one in reading *Calvinist Contact* and belonging to the same organization. If only we can continue to love each other because the Lord loved us first. Alas, we are not very good at that.

Not one mould

Christian organizations, unlike the church, are dealing with the complexities of life in economics, social relations, labour relations, politics, education, environmental concerns, defence, etc. It would be miraculous, indeed, if we all agreed on the myriad problems we encounter. Why should a Christian labour union think exactly the same way about the countless details of employer-employee relations as a Christian employers' organization? Why should Christian teachers always agree with Christian institutions of higher learning? Why should a Christian political movement expect approval from all Reformed folk? And why should a Christian free press merely mouth what other Christian organizations say? Most importantly, why should or how could the Church baptize the (often conflicting) pronouncements of the various Christian organizations?

Why should we all be squeezed into the same mould when it comes to intricate questions concerning social welfare, wage levels, housing policies, cruise testing, foreign investments, nuclear energy, urban renewal, and so on?

We all think *Calvinist Contact* should be an example of a truly Christian, truly free press. If that is so (and I hope it is) then don't expect C.C. to be all things to all people (an impossibility anyway).

Christian journalism approaches the problematics of life with its own mandate, from its own angle, with its own investigation. We should respect that and not expect it to be a conduit of some organization or other. As a columnist I don't speak for the CLAC, either, even though I work full-time for it. In other words, don't blame CLAC for what I write in C.C.

We don't always have to agree; in fact, we will often agree to disagree. Which (by implication) means that we should be a little more careful with our claims that our utterances represent the Christian viewpoint. Sometimes they do. Sometimes they'd better lest we betray our Christian convictions. But there is such a thing as Christian freedom to choose. Let's not always be so cocksure about the Lord's will. (Remember the Crusades!)

One direction

But of course, there is more to a Christian community than just that. (This is my *second* point.) Our diversity of opinion must ultimately rest in our spiritual oneness. Despite differences of opinion and conviction, our Christian direction will have to come through loud and clear. What will have to set us apart from the secular world is bowing before the sovereign Lord (and not to idols), our explicit recognition that we exist only by the grace of Jesus Christ, our unconditional allegiance to him in all things, and our confession that we are here to seek his Kingdom and righteousness first.

These confessions are enough to drive away the forces of Satan that seek to divide us. Perhaps Satan is so successful because we don't practise our *common faith* enough? That doesn't mean we all must subscribe to C.C., be members of CLAC or supporters of CPJ. Our differences may be such that we feel we have to resign. But this should be a truly last resort.

Study the issues

Two things are indispensable for Christian journalism (as well as all other Christian endeavours) to live up to its name. You have to make sure you know your stuff, and you

have to get your facts straight. The late Dr. Zuidema once said, "You cannot know the world unless you know the Bible," but then he added, "neither can you know the Bible unless you know the world." That means we must test and discern the spirits to see whether they are from God. (Sorry to say, we don't always do that, not in the pages of C.C. either.)

It also means we must study the issues. Few things are so annoying as listening to or reading someone who holds forth with great fervour and deep conviction but who obviously doesn't know what he or she is talking about. I will refrain from citing examples but I have heard and seen it all too often. We hear a lot about the moral implications of this, that and the next thing. But remember, the first rule for Christian moral behaviour is that we speak the truth and not a particular ideology.

The most essential fact

There is one more point I'd like to make. It is the most important point, so important, in fact, that as far as I am concerned, you may forget everything I have said as long as you remember this one. It is not a new revelation. On the contrary, it is an old, familiar one; we all know about it

Continued on page 10.

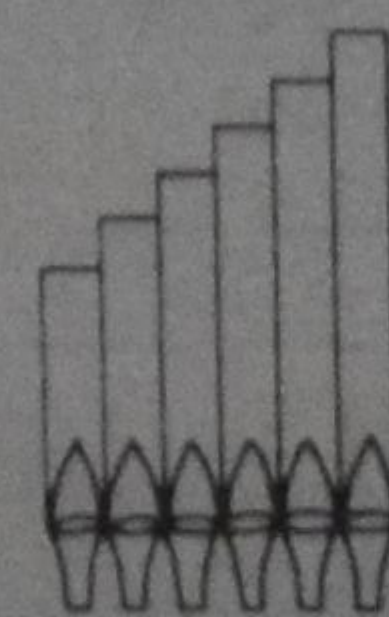
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Whither pilgrim; whither C.C.?

Bert Witvoet

The image of a Christian being a pilgrim on this earth is a biblical image. It tells us that we have no permanent residence here. It reminds us of the brevity of life. But it also shows us a changing landscape. When you travel, your environment unfolds in front of you and rolls up again behind you.

When I think of *Calvinist Contact* over the years (we're talking 44 years), I think of a journey through a landscape. A glance at the wall in our lunch area portrays that journey by means of front pages. Of course, I'm not the only one who thinks of a journey. Yet, we all have different ideas about what it is like to travel, and what we do as we travel. Some people look at the road deck and try to figure out whether they are left-siders, right-siders or middle-of-the-

roaders.

That preoccupation does not hold my attention as I travel. I'm more interested in knowing where the road leads me, what the landscape is like, and how my fellow travellers are doing. Let me explain.

Destination, landscape, traveller

Where the road leads is a directional concern. We are constantly being influenced in this matter of direction. We are called upon to discern the

spirits of our time and to test them by biblical norms. Know to whose drum you are marching.

What the landscape is like is a matter of being in contact with your time and culture. We are in this world, though not of it. Being in this world means that, whether we like it or not, the agenda is not under our control. We have to relate to a society that is changing.

An example: we may have an instinctive preference for the way families used to operate — the father works out of the house, the mother is at home and the children are not in need of day care. That pattern has changed today. Quite often the cost of living dictates that both parents work. What are we going to do? Are we going to preach the old system, or should we adjust to the new realities? It's not that I want to remove all tensions here, but to pretend that the old is still in place is misreading the landscape. We have to seriously address new situations.

How my fellow travellers are doing is a concern for the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of our neighbours and ourselves. Our articles on incest were written and published out of that concern. Henri Nouwen's belief that the heart is more important than the mind, that being is more important than doing, and that together is better than alone addresses that concern too.

Narrow focus

As I look at C.C.'s journey, I notice a broadening of concern. We used to focus

almost entirely on the directional or the confessional. There was great comfort in knowing that we are Reformed. That meant we were headed in the right direction.

But while we were "headed in the right direction," we were not always so aware of the Canadian landscape. And that is understandable, because many of us were immigrants with European minds. We saw a different landscape than was there. I think this also came out with the recent emergence of the Christian Heritage Party. We did not know the history of this landscape, the many miles that went before. It's like stepping on the train in Hamilton to go to Toronto and thinking that you have seen Canada.

But that's not the only reason we did not pay enough attention to the landscape, I believe. Our emphasis on faith, conviction, determination made us somewhat limited in focus. We stressed the antithesis, which sometimes meant it was us and them. We had a theological mind: we were thinking of our destiny more than of our present situation. We were going to build churches and schools and Christian labour associations. Sometimes we did not count the human cost. I am not knocking these developments, by the way. I'm merely showing that we were afflicted with a bit of tunnel vision.

The journey into the inner self did not take place so much either. And that was a characteristic of the times. It was not until the '60s rolled around that the hippy

movement called us to slow down and smell the flowers and look into ourselves. Today, counselling practices are springing up everywhere, also in the Christian community. We are asking ourselves how we are doing as people in relationship to one another. I believe that that is a necessary corrective to the way we used to ignore relationships or fail to understand how much each one of us needs to know ourselves and to be affirmed and encouraged. We dare to acknowledge in more concrete ways, perhaps, that although faith is important, love is the greater gift.

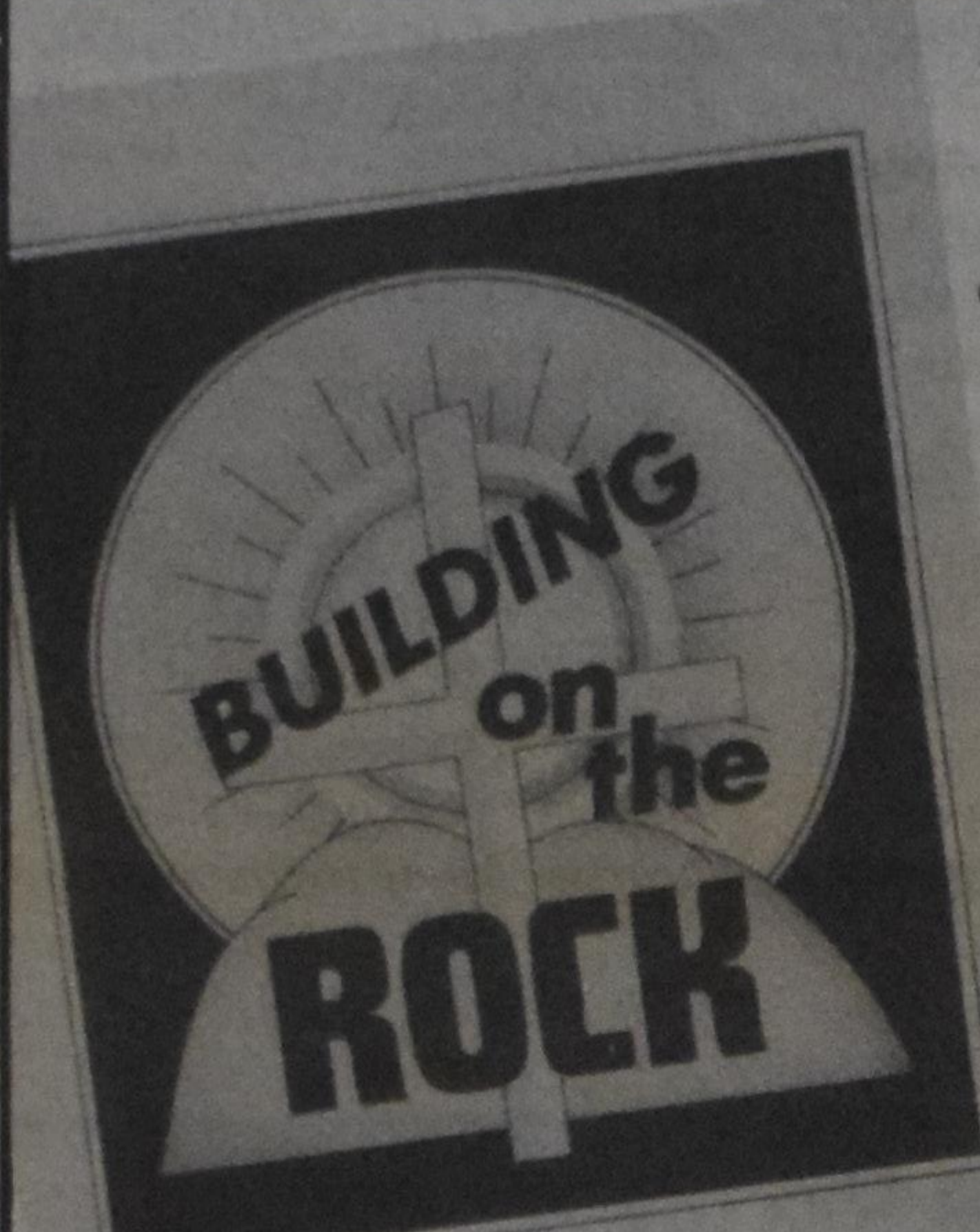
Discern the times

I'm not suggesting that we accept everything that our landscape brings us. In a recent article in *Psychology Today*, Anne Remley describes the trend in our society from obedience to independence. "Parents used to raise their children to be dutiful. Today they're raising them to be self-reliant." Remley compares statistics from a survey in 1924 and from one in 1978. In 1924, mothers from Muncie, Indiana, valued the following traits: strict obedience, loyalty to church, and good manners. There was a strong preference for conformity. Fifty-four years later, a new generation of Muncie, Indiana, mothers sought almost opposing values — social-mindedness, tolerance and independence. The emphasis had moved from conforming to the larger group towards independence of the individual.

There is something that

Continued on page 11.

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— Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof

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Neither triumph nor despair

Ed Vanderkloet

... continued from page 9
although we have a strange and strong propensity to forget it.

One day last month it was my wife's turn to lead our mealtime devotions. She read from Luke 10, the well-known story of how Jesus sends his followers into the towns and villages to preach that the Kingdom is near. When they return they are jubilant. "Even the spirits were subject to us," they report. Jesus responds by saying that he saw Satan fall from the sky like lightning. Satan trembles because the announcement of the coming of God's Kingdom means the fall of his own kingdom.

Isn't this fantastic? Well, up to a certain point only, because Jesus adds something very peculiar: "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you but rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Now, that sounds like a real downer to us people who are in the front lines to advance God's Kingdom. We are the people that profess the kingship of Christ. We go out into the world to claim this society *pro rege*, for the King. We do battle with the spirits of this age to subject them to the rule of Christ the King. And here the King himself says to his disciples *and to us*, "Don't rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

God does it all

I don't believe for a moment that the Lord inserts some dualism into our lives here: "never mind this world, as long as your souls are saved." No, he teaches that our successes in the world (as well as our failures) aren't that terribly important after all. And that's

often our problem.

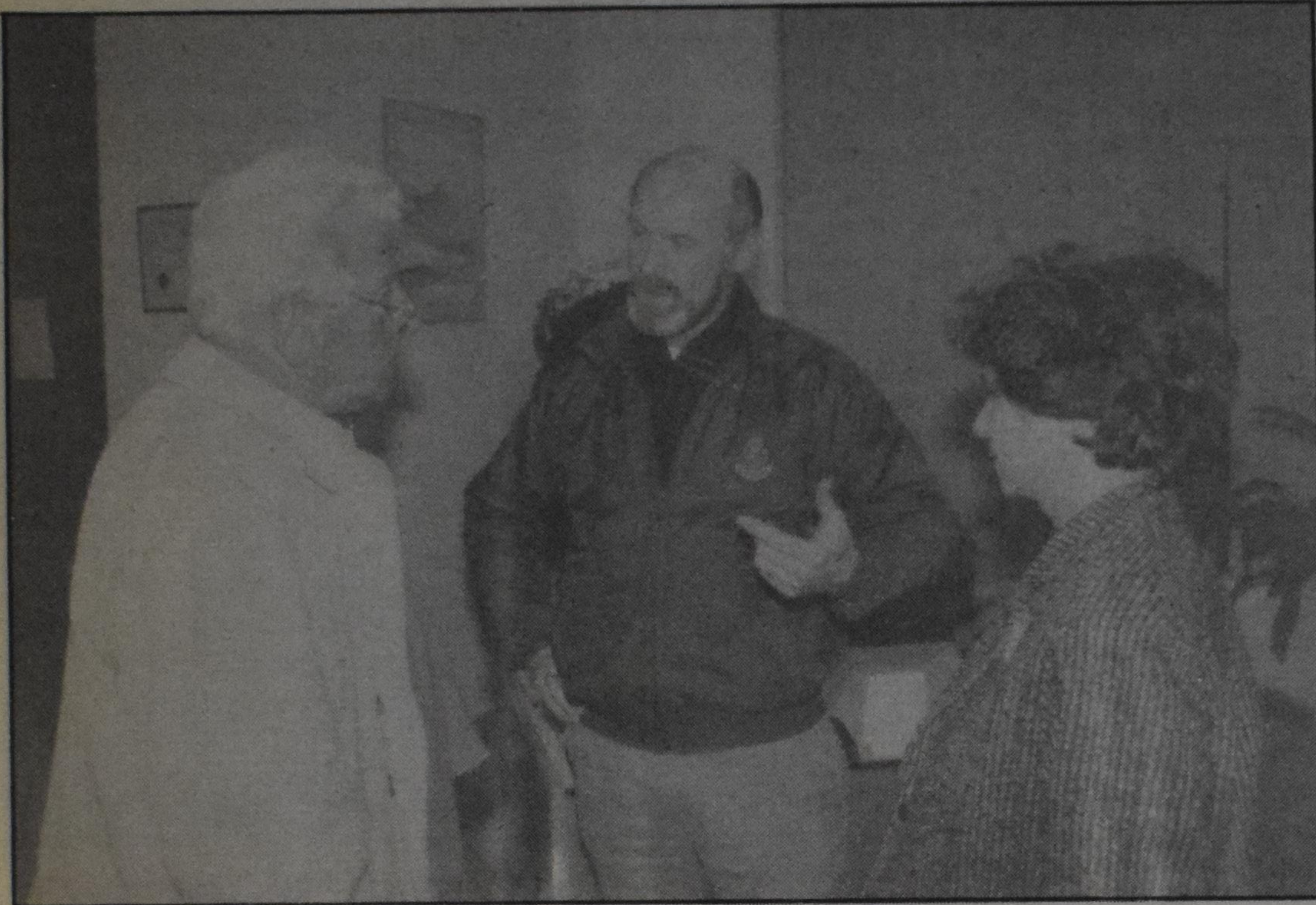
When my articles appear in print that's what I read first. I suspect that Bert Witvoet and the other contributors here do the same. And that's OK, but it's not very important.

That's a rather sobering thought, but it is the truth. God's Kingdom is coming, not *because* of us but *in spite* of us. And that is reason for good cheer. The Lord tells us (C.C. staff, contributors, supporters) not to gloat over our triumphs, but also not to get depressed when the crap is flying our way.

After all, our names are written in heaven. And one day we will discover that when all is said and done, God is the one who has said and done it all.

Ed Vanderkloet is executive secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

Whither pilgrim; whither C.C.?



Reinder Klein makes a point as Nick Knoppers (l) and Diane Klein listen attentively.

Bert Witvoet

... continued from page 10
bothers me about the results of these surveys. In 1924, mothers scored comparatively low on social-mindedness, on tolerance and on independence. As a Christian I regret that low score. But in 1978, mothers scored low on obedience, loyalty to church and patriotism. As a Christian I regret that low score, too. What we are witnessing, I believe, is the swing of a pendulum. And that is characteristic of a society that has lost its sense of direction. Fortunately our society tends to veer back when it goes off course. But it always moves in terms of what went before, and there are many casualties. There seems to be no compass.

Better equipped

I would hope that the Christian community is more stable that way. However, we have to realize that we, too, will veer off. We can't escape being influenced by our society. We should not become too paranoid about that, either. It comes with the landscape. It's the price we pay for being part of a culture. Also, we can't escape the presence of evil in our midst. One of the worst faults of our Reformed community is to rage against particular errors or perceived errors and sins in our midst to such an extent that one can only conclude that other evils get covered up or denied. Such rage breeds hypocrisy.

But we will not veer off too far as long as we remain open to correction. We *do* have that fixed star or reference point in scripture and we do have that pilot in the Holy Spirit. In that sense, we are better equipped than those who try to find their way without God.

Greater maturity

What I have observed in the

Reformed community is, to a certain extent, hopeful. I talked earlier about faith and love. Well, hope is also an important gift. I am hopeful because our community is paying more attention to the landscape and to fellow travellers and to the traveller him- or herself. The quality of the journey is improving. That does not happen without tension, of course. Nor does it occur without casualties.

The tension arises because there are those who want to cling to the old patterns, the old landscape. *Calvinist Contact* has become liberal, they say. It's no longer giving us all the answers. It's not focused enough on direction. It's too concerned with feelings and relationships and it tries too hard to connect with the surrounding culture.

The casualties come when others misinterpret the present make-up of C.C., when they assume that we think the goal is no longer important, that direction is up for grabs, that it's good to become individualistic and focus almost exclusively on personal fulfilment. (There is a loosening of commitment to the Christian school, for example. Some parents leave it up to the child to decide, a child who may be at the mercy of peer pressure.)

Many-sided calling

This is not an easy time to be a kingly, prophetic and priestly voice. I should call your attention, by the way, to the fact that our masthead used to refer to the rule of Christ. Just recently we changed that to the "truth, care and rule of Christ." There are three dimensions to our task. We must be orthodox in our thinking, we must care for each other and we must have dominion in this culture.

But I would add another

dimension to these callings or offices: we are very imperfect prophets, priests and kings. For that reason we must learn to laugh at ourselves and at our orthodoxy, our acts of mercy and our cultural dominion. I'm tempted to say we are called to four offices; that of, prophet, priest, king and clown — clown in the tragic-comic sense of a laugh to relativize our own importance and a tear to help us ask God for forgiveness.

I do not know where the Reformed community is headed. There are troublesome signs, too. Signs of fundamentalism and pietism, signs of head-faith and traditionalism, signs of self-righteous anger and cowardly status-quoism, signs of materialism and secularism, signs of humanism. As we turn more towards psycho-social concerns, are we losing our theological and philosophical grounding? When do we become too subjectivistic as we move away from a previous objectivism and rationalism?

But I remain excited about

the challenges that lie ahead and hopeful about the surprises that the Lord has in store for us. I remain dedicated to the call of escaping the dialectic of conservative/liberal. Some people confuse a longing for freedom and room to explore with the notion of liberalism, by the way. True liberalism is dedicated to individualism and to humanism. What they have seen in *Calvinist Contact* is a sense of freedom under grace. This freedom is ours in Christ. And this freedom I don't want C.C. to lose.

Desert talk

When I think of our task in the Reformed community, again an image comes to mind. We are pilgrims, but we need to rest from time to time. I would like *Calvinist Contact* to be an oasis of sanity. I would like to see it present a kind of journalism which does not assassinate characters, that does not jump on bandwagons, that does not boil down to mere advocacy journalism. Instead, I would like C.C. to inform people, show them the complexity of problems, allow a certain suspension of judgment and final conclusion, but sensitively give direction and hope.


Last week someone from London, Ontario, complimented us on the fact that we were giving the readers a mix of news and opinion. Sometimes I don't want to know what others think of

certain things, he said. At such a time I just like to be informed. I guess what he was saying was that one can get too much of a good thing. Sometimes he wants just to be informed and to do the reforming himself. His comment reminded me that we need to trust our readers. An oasis of trust, of sharing, of quiet conversation.

Without following George Bush's image of a thousand points of light, I might, nevertheless, plead for the gentler Calvinism, but also for a courageous Calvinism that is not afraid to honestly examine the issues that face us today.

So we are pilgrims on the way. Let me take one final look at that image by quoting the last paragraph of my 1988 Editor's Report to the Editorial Advisory Board:

This has not been a year of standing still. I have found a certain excitement in the way things developed. The Lord is continuing to make room for us. With the writer of Ecclesiastes I say that "the Lord has made everything beautiful in its time." I enjoy that beauty. But the imperfections of our lives and our community and the painful road our society is taking makes me affirm too that "he has placed eternity in their hearts." I long for the coming of Christ and for the coming of his Kingdom.

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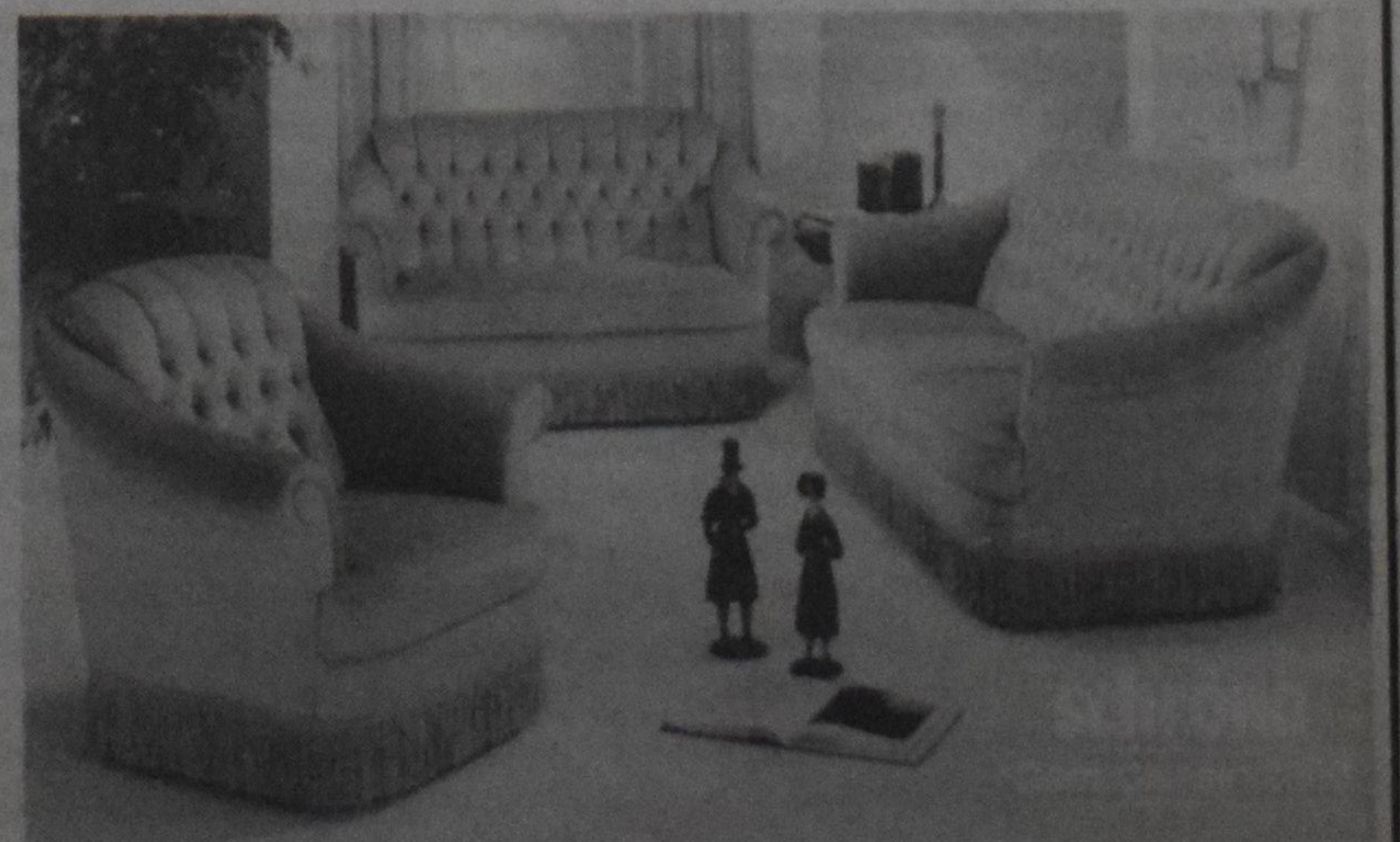
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Feature

Face to face with poverty in Bangladesh



Photo: Bill Beldman
Halima Beldman (r) struck up an instant friendship with Nasrin Akter.

Bert Witvoet

Last month, Bill and Claire Beldman of Hannon, Ont., took their 12-year-old adopted daughter, Halima, back to her homeland, Bangladesh. The threesome joined a larger London, Ont., group of parents and adopted children from Bangladesh. The week-long excursion left an indelible impression on the children as well as on their adoptive parents.

The group are members of Canadopt, which is a fundraising arm of Families for Children. Families for Children operates orphanages in Bangladesh and has recently built a children's village in Sreepur, a two-hour drive north of Dhaka. The official opening of Children's Village was the central event of the visit by the 27 Canadians. The group was accompanied by four journalists.

No one was prepared for the poverty and brokenness they were to encounter in this country. According to Bill Beldman, Bangladesh will always be a place of disasters and devastating conditions. Almost 113 million people try to eke out an existence in a country no larger than New Brunswick. If the whole population of the world were dumped into the United States, the population density would equal that of Bangladesh, he said (780 people per sq. km.). There is no major industry to support the economy. People somehow have to live off the land.

To understand the misery there, one has to know a little bit of history, says Bill. The early '70s was a critical time for Bangladesh, then called East Pakistan. West Pakistan (mostly Hindu) invaded East Pakistan (mostly Muslim). Terrible atrocities were committed by the West Pakistanis. Millions of people were killed, thousands of women were raped, most of the educated were shot; children were discarded. India finally stepped in to stop the war and create two separate countries. It was from this cauldron of trouble that the young Bangladesh-Canadians had been rescued.

Initial impact

The arrival at the Dhaka airport was a shocking experience for the group of Canadians. Before they emerged from

the airport, crowds of people wanting to meet them were kept at bay with whips. Once out of the terminal, they were immediately surrounded by street urchins and beggars, some severely handicapped. Everyone wanted to touch them.

"The kids were shook up," recalls Beldman. "They didn't feel safe." They felt helpless in the midst of all the poverty they saw, raw sewage running into lagoons, people living in shacks. They were crying as they stood by the window of the hotel. This was the country they had been taken from when they were very young. They felt so grateful they had been adopted by their Canadian parents at a time when the Bangladesh borders were still open. One of the children wanted to go back home immediately.

The group had earlier decided not to take up residence in the fancy Shownigan hotel. They wanted to have contact with the people of Bangladesh. So they settled in what turned out to be a tacky and dirty hotel a few blocks down the street — the Sunderban. It was surrounded by shacks and dilapidated buildings. They could not safely eat or drink there, though; so, they ate at the Shownigan. Their stay was made more comfortable, too, by the Canadian High Commission, who spared no efforts to look after their transportation and other needs.

The first day or so the Canadian children, ranging between 12 and 17, clung together. They did not speak Bengali. Local people could not figure them out. They looked Bangladesh, but their speech, manner and dress suggested otherwise. But by the third day, the children began to relax. They learned that the people, though curious and unreserved, were very friendly. They realized that these were really their

people.

Tumultuous welcome

On the third day of their visit, the Canadians were taken by bus to the Children's Village, in Sreepur. The village consists of villa-like buildings grouped around courtyards. It houses about 650 children, most of them orphans (Village capacity is 1,000!). It is operated by Families for Children, an organization founded by a Toronto woman, Sandra Simpson. It was this organization that had arranged for Canadian adoptions to take place in the mid-'70s.

Most of the funding for the Village came from Britain through the efforts of British Airways flight attendant Pat Kerr. Both Pat and Sandra work with the children and helped arrange for the Canadians' visit.

The roads were so bad, however, that the guests had to walk the last mile-and-a-half on that very warm day. Claire Beldman described the scene as they neared the complex. The Village children had apparently been eating lunch, but as soon as they realized the Canadian guests were coming, some 300 kids let out one united shriek, ran from the tables, some stepping over the tables and into plates of food in their excitement; they descended on the Canadians.

"It was heartbreaking to see how hungry these kids were for love," says Claire. "They all wanted attention, to

be held and hugged. These were all kids that had been abandoned." It was an instant love-in.

The Canadians had brought one gift for each child, but they never distributed them because of the chaos that would have resulted. After this initial introduction, they were given a tour. They learned that the children do not leave the Village until they have learned to read, to speak English and to master a skill (all rare accomplishments in Bangladesh).

The Canadians met some of the *iyahs* that look after the children. *Iyahs* are (mostly single) women who live with the children and care for them. Some of them have their own children living with them. Since there are few men working with the Village children, every adult is called "mummy." Bill and Claire Beldman were both called mummy, too.

The group returned to Dhaka that day, but promised to be back in two days for the official opening of the Village.

Panty raid

They did return. And this time they slept on thin mats on the cement floor of the boys' dorm. In the morning Bangladesh president Hossain Mohammed Ershad would be flown in by helicopter for the ceremony. (The army had moved in the day before with machine-guns and other military paraphernalia.) It promised to be an exciting day for the Village children.

"They felt helpless in the midst of all the poverty they saw."



Halima (centre) watches in amusement as children pose for the camera.

The Canadians had brought underwear for each child. The morning of the big day each child was bathed, which consisted of being hosed down in batches and soaped. Then it was time to dress them. The children fought to be first. It took everybody, including the guests, two hours to dress them all. Some of the little girls had never worn underwear before and proudly lifted their skirts from time to time to show off their panties.

By the end of the day, most of the younger children were without outer clothes or underwear, however. These were either stolen or traded for a bottle of pop by soldiers or other adults wanting these things for their own children. This incident helped the Beldmans understand why the Village children normally run around in unwashed rags. There is no way of holding on to proper clothes, and no way of keeping them clean.

Pomp and disregard

Bill Beldman described the scene when President Ershad stepped from his helicopter. Hundreds of peasants had gathered around the complex but were kept a hundred yards away by soldiers. All the Village children were lined up in two rows leading from the helicopter site to the podium that had been constructed for the event. The Canadian flag was flying from one structure.

There was a formal ceremony during

which the president spoke in English. It struck Beldman that not one word was addressed to his own people standing at a distance or to the little children for whom the Village had been built. All of it was directed towards the British and Canadian visitors and their press. The 13 Bangladesh-Canadian children were asked to stand up together to receive enthusiastic applause.

But if you ask the Beldmans about the highlight of their visit, they will say it was not the ceremony, but meeting the children and playing with them.

A time for feelings

At the end of the day, it was time to say goodbye. Tears flow easily in the Children's Village, said one report in *The Toronto Star*. The Beldmans confirmed that. It was especially hard for Halima Beldman to say goodbye to Nasrin Aktaer, a 15-year-old girl with whom she had struck up an instant friendship. Nasrin, too, was very sad. Someone had given Halima a bouquet of flowers, and Halima in turn took a silver ring from her finger and gave it to Nasrin. Nasrin shook her head. But Claire Beldman urged her to take it. And suddenly they were all crying.

As they left, Nasrin pleaded with Claire Beldman, "Take me home with you." If Claire would have been allowed by the authorities to take children out of the country, she would have taken some along, she said. Though the need is acute in Bangladesh,

"Why is there so much misery in this world?"

the Muslim government has for years not allowed any children to leave the country. The principal reason is that it does not want to surrender anyone to another faith. It's not surprising, therefore, that at the Village too, the Christian faith is not taught.

All in all, it was a very emotional trip for the Beldmans. Emotional, too, was the moment when Halima met the iyah that had nursed her back to health when she was two or three weeks old, paralysed, malnourished and near death. For nine months the woman had looked after her, giving her physical therapy. When the Beldmans picked Halima up in Montreal on Nov. 30, 1977, she weighed only 10½ lbs. but had regained the use of her limbs and was gaining strength. Now, more than 11 years later, the iyah asked Halima to jump up and down and demonstrate the use of her limbs. Although she had immediately recognized Halima, she could not get over how healthy and beautiful the girl had become.

Lingering pictures

Several images haunt the Beldmans as they are back in their comfortable home in Hannon, Ontario. They cannot forget the sea of humanity that had washed over them, be it ever so briefly. One image in particular haunts Claire as she remembers a visit to a home for destitute women in Dhaka. A young woman was sitting in the corner of a room holding her child.

Normally a Bangladesh woman will want you to hold her baby for a moment, says Claire. But this woman would not let anyone hold her baby. She was a single mother and she had to go back to work after her brief maternity leave. Because there was no one to look after her child, she had to give it up. The day the Canadians visited the orphanage was the last day she could have the baby.

All these heart-rending encounters left the Beldmans with many, many questions. Why is there so much misery in this world? Why are we so rich and the people of Bangladesh so poor? The experience left them feeling powerless.

In spite of those feelings, Halima and some of the other Bangladesh-Canadian young people expressed a strong desire to return to Bangladesh some day to work at Children's Village. The group of adults, in turn, vowed that they would raise \$50,000 a year to fund the cost of elementary and high school education in Children's Village. One cannot meet so many needy people, look into their eyes, and simply turn one's back on them.

Note: If anyone wishes to sponsor a child at Children's Village in Bangladesh, \$12 a month will pay for the support of one child — food, clothing, education, etc. Send donations to Sandra Simpson, Families for Children, 45 Russell Hill Rd., Toronto, ON M4V 2S9.



Claire Beldman would gladly have smuggled these two orphans out of the country.

Church/News

Marian Van Til, page editor

Repeat driver offenders to get special courses

(Canadian Scene) — Over the next three years, at least 3,000 repeat traffic offenders in Winnipeg will be required to participate in and pay for a driver improvement program designed to improve their driving behaviour.

Manitoba Highways and Transportation Minister Albert Driedger said the three-year experimental program will be applied initially in Winnipeg. After studying the results of the program and evaluating its effectiveness, he said consideration will be given

to extending it throughout Manitoba.

"I'd like to emphasize," said Driedger, "that repeat offenders will bear the entire cost of the program through course fees. We estimate that at least 1,000 individuals will be taking the course each year over the next three years."

The Manitoba Safety Council (MSC) will provide the courses. To cover start-up costs, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation will provide MSC with a \$30,000 line of credit. The money,

eventually recoverable from course fees, will be used to provide equipment, training and materials.

Noting that the program is designed to improve driver behaviour and attitudes, Driedger said it appears to have had that effect in New York state, where the system has been in operation for seven years. "There, graduates recorded a 22 per cent reduction in accidents and a 64 per cent reduction in convictions," he said.

TV options to broaden in Manitoba

(Canadian Scene) — Soon, Manitobans in many rural and northern communities are expected to have the kind of television programming selection enjoyed by residents of larger centres.

Telecommunications minister Glen Findlay has announced a

policy change which will allow cable TV companies to build and own systems in communities which currently do not have cable service.

Previous policy required every cable TV system in Manitoba to lease distribution equipment from the Manitoba Telephone

System. "These new cable systems will not only provide a broader selection of broadcast services, but will also create a number of jobs in rural areas, particularly during the construction phase."

Buddhists receive Christian literature, request more

RANGOON, Burma (EP) — In recent months, volunteers with Every Home for Christ (EHC) have blanketed the Mandalay portion of Burma, a predominantly Buddhist area, with Christian literature, resulting in hundreds of requests for more literature and for Bible correspondence course material.

Mandalay is the heart of Buddhist worship and thought, and home to many holy shrines and monasteries, according to EHC. However, many people — including Buddhist monks — are willing to discuss the gospel with Christians. In recent months, EHC workers took Christian literature to 54,000 homes, and received requests from 410 for Bible correspondence course

material. Aung Hla, the national director of EHC in Burma, said that some of the Buddhist monks "are very obliging" and welcomed him into their monasteries to preach the gospel. Presently, 44 Buddhist monks are enrolled in Bible correspondence with EHC.

"I want everyone to know that there is salvation only through Christ," says Khin Soe, a recent convert from Buddhism. "After going through the EHC Bible correspondence course, I found out that the Bible is the only book which reveals truth."

EHC staff have said that Soe's testimony is a great tool in witnessing to the Buddhist community there.

Pilot of crippled airplane thanks God for safe landing

HONOLULU, Hawaii (EP) — God gets the credit for the safe landing of crippled United Airlines plane, according to a Honolulu newspaper. Pilot David Cronin guided the damaged plane to safety at Honolulu International Airport with only two of its four engines, after a 10-by-20 foot hole opened in the side of the plane.

"His overall reaction was he gives all the credit to the Heavenly Father watching over him," Cronin's daughter, Karen Twigg-Smith, told the *Honolulu Advertiser*. "That's

one of the first things he told me when I first talked to him: 'I give all the credit to the Lord.' I told him, 'Dad, it's your skill,' and he said, 'But the Lord gave me that skill.'"

Cronin has not spoken publicly about the incident on the flight, which was to have been the next to last of his career. The plane, which was bound for Auckland, New Zealand, carried 354 people, nine of whom are missing after being sucked out of the plane. Cronin, 59, has flown for United Airlines for over 34 years.

Priest wins \$6.7 million in California lottery

AUBURN, Calif. (EP) — A Roman Catholic priest won \$6.7 million in the California State Lottery. Boleslaw Wdowiak, better known as "Father Bosco," serves St. Joseph's Church in Auburn, California, in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

Wdowiak, who will receive an after-tax income of \$276,000 a year for 20 years, left a message with his church saying he had gone on a retreat to pray about how to handle his new fortune. "I am happy, confused, and very thankful," his message said. "The Lord

has been good to me all my life and I have tried to serve him as a priest. This I will continue to do. This money, when it comes, is also a gift which I will try to use in a manner pleasing to the Lord who has blessed me."

Bishop Francis Quinn, who supervises Wdowiak's parish, noted that diocesan priests do not take a vow of poverty, and said Wdowiak will be free to spend his money as he pleases. He also said that Wdowiak broke no church policy by playing the lottery. "I'm sure Father Bosco bought tickets in moderation," he said. "The Catholic Church has always had a policy on gambling that it can be done as recreation but becomes a sin only when it's done to a point that it's taking away from the necessities of life, or would hurt others. Playing the lottery rather than buying groceries would be wrong."

Samen zijn we beter!

Verdrijf rassendiscriminatie in Canada



21 maart

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A Presbyterian Comments

Robert J. Bernhardt

Robert J. Bernhardt

No human being can claim to know everything there is to know. Indeed, as Christians, our desire to know always exceeds our ability to learn. What Christian understands all there is to know about the Christian faith?

For that matter, however competent someone may be at his or her job or career, who would dare to claim that there was nothing further to learn? Indeed, there is always the possibility that our ignorance may result in someone's being inconvenienced, hurt or endangered.

While some jobs or careers may seem less likely than others to cause harm to someone, such possibilities are obvious. A mistake by a doctor or a nurse may produce an instant fatality. Careless work by an automobile mechanic could easily transform a casual afternoon drive into a nightmare. A building whose design or workmanship is faulty may simply collapse.

From time to time

newspapers carry stories detailing the legal action that someone who claims to have been hurt or endangered has launched to recover damages. If proven, they either expose someone who has acted callously without appropriate concern for others or they chronicle the fate of someone who, despite their usual competence, has faltered.

Settling for mediocrity?

Within the church we do well to reflect upon this matter of competence and responsibility. How do we measure up as we live out our faith? Do we live and express our faith with such clarity and visibility that no one could ever accuse us of malpractice? If someone inquires about the rudiments of the faith are we poised to respond with accuracy and in the spirit of the gospel? Would our children ever have reason to be less than fully satisfied with the competent and sensitive way in which we have shared the faith with them?

Needed: Competent Christians

Has every needy member of the Christian community been met and sustained with an unreserved demonstration of fellowship? Have the "widows and orphans" in our midst been adequately and fairly supplied with the bounty of the saints? Have those who minister the gospel always been sustained with the love, encouragement and liberality of the saints? Have those who have ventured forth into the world as missionaries always known the support of a Christian community which is prepared to set all else aside for the sake of the gospel? Have those who exercise leadership

within the church always been clothed with humility as they engage in the work of ruling?

I raise these questions neither for the purpose of judging nor humiliating? The issue is simply this: if a flawed world can aspire, however imperfectly, to reflect faithfulness and quality in the fulfilling of responsibility, can the Christian community ever accept a less demanding goal?

We celebrate a God whose love is infinite and eternal. We testify to an incarnate Lord whose humility, obedience, and unselfish sacrifice expose all lesser models. We acknowledge a persevering

Spirit of God devoted to the equipping of the saints for worship and service in the Kingdom. As ones so acquainted with the presence and excellence of the Lord must we not be moved always to seek opportunities to live thankfully and appropriately for his glory? If we are able without lament to settle for mediocrity in Christian life and service then surely there is just cause for either our understanding or our sincerity to be challenged.

Robert J. Bernhardt is pastor of Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont.

CR World Missions appoints training assistant

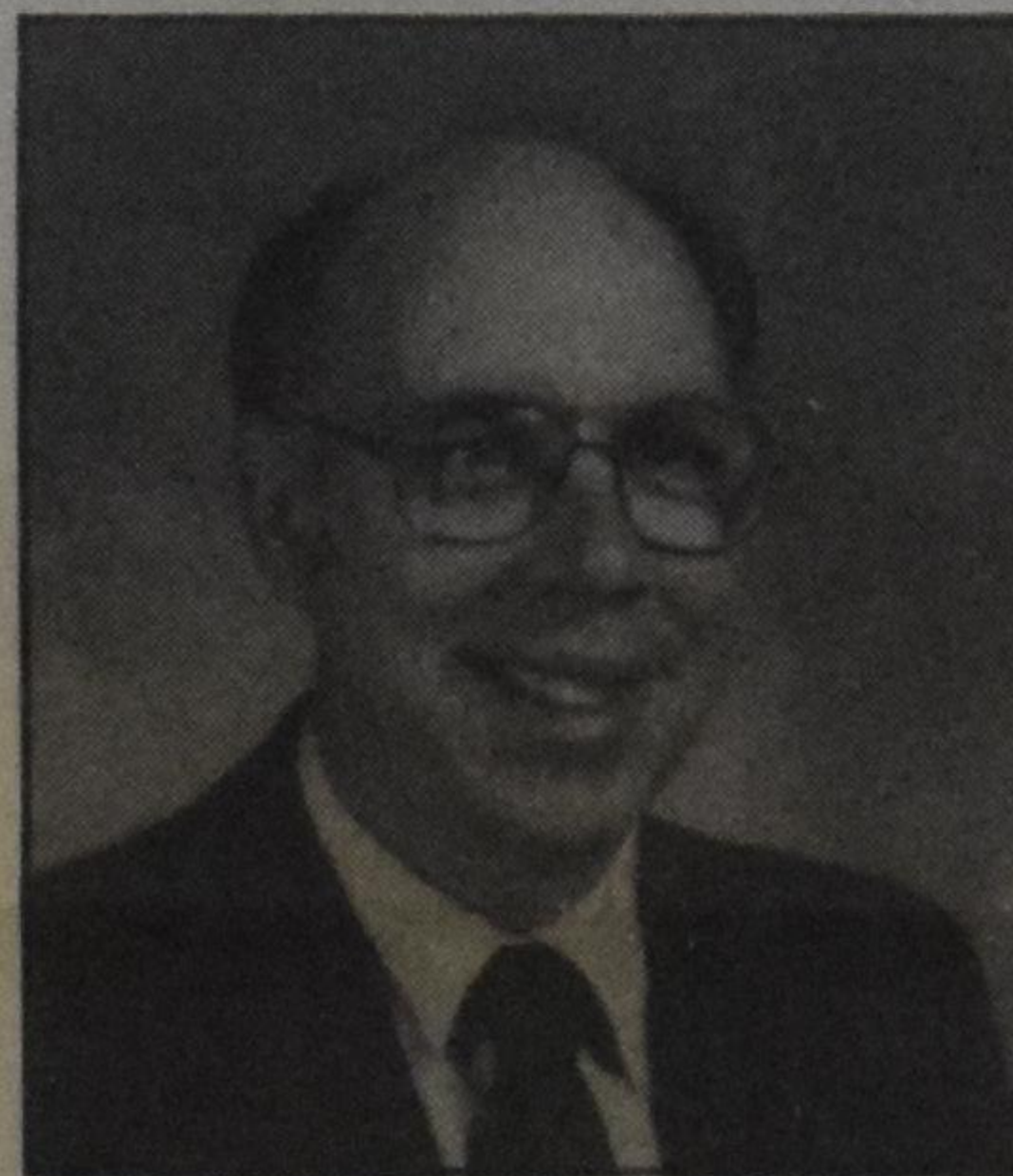


Photo: courtesy CRWM
Abe Vreeke

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (CRWM) — From 1968 to 1984 Abe Vreeke was a missionary for Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM) in Nigeria, serving as a principal and teacher at Veenstra Seminary and at two leadership training centres. After five years as

principal of the Community Christian School in Pease, Minnesota, Vreeke will rejoin CRWM in Grand Rapids, Mich., as a training assistant.

"We came home from Nigeria because we felt our family situation demanded that we be home with the kids," explains Vreeke, who has four children, the oldest of whom will attend Calvin College this fall. "But my first love has always been missions and I see the training assistant position as a way to get back to working for World Missions again."

As training assistant, Vreeke, 44, will be responsible for the development and administration of pre-field orientation programs and continuing education for missionary staff. In addition, he will work on policies for the

education of missionary children, provide churches and schools with information about missionary education programs, and maintain relationships with other organizations involved in missionary training and education. He will begin his duties in July.

Vreeke, 44, graduated from Calvin College in 1964 with a degree in secondary education, and from Calvin Seminary in 1981 with a master's degree in church education. He is currently working on a master's degree in private school administration at the College of St. Thomas near Pease, Minnesota.

Dutch church explains its withdrawal from Reformed Ecumenical Council

URK, the Netherlands (REC) — The ambiguity of the decisions of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Harare last summer is the main reason given for the suspension of the REC membership of the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CGKN). "On the one hand the RES [now REC] repeated the stern warnings at the address of the GKN [Reformed Churches in the Netherlands], while on the other hand no decision was reached as far as the membership of the GKN within the RES is concerned," said a letter to the CGKN circulated in late January to all present and former members of the Reformed Ecumenical Council.

of the REC.

The letter charged that other churches in the REC were responsible for this state of affairs. "The attitude of big denominations, particularly the CRCNA (Christian Reformed Church in North America) and the NGKSA (Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa), has been of such a nature that church-politics rather than principles have ultimately led to the decisions that have been taken," the letter stated. This charge was already made last year in the CGKN newspaper, *De Wekker*. The CGKN delegates said that the GKN softened its objections to the NGK's position on apartheid, while the NGK agreed to support the

GKN's membership in the REC. The CRCNA went along on both questions, the CGKN delegates believe.

Rev. Clarence Boomsma, who was head of the CRCNA delegation to Harare, said that he was unaware that any such "church politics" were going on, certainly not within the CRCNA delegation. "Nothing of that sort was ever hinted at in discussion among our delegation," Boomsma

declared. "Our delegation was committed to keeping all parties within the REC until all avenues of discussion were exhausted."

The CGKN will decide on the question of their membership in the REC at their synod meeting later this year. The letter came from the committee in charge of relations with

churches in foreign countries and was signed by the secretary of that committee, Rev. P. den Butter.

Not principled?

By keeping the GKN in the council, the letter argued, the REC has in fact adopted the new model of interpreting the scriptures, a model connected with the idea of pluralism. Pluralism is introduced, the letter said, when a view of scripture "that deviates from the Reformed conviction" is tolerated, and when churches that depart from the Bible and these Reformed convictions are allowed to remain as members

Close to the deadline — Fax it

Calvinist Contact has recently acquired a facsimile machine. We expect that many of our columnists, advertisers and readers will make use of this quick means of sending articles, ads and other communications. Our Fax number is (416) 682-8313.

We do ask those who submit communications to preferably send typed material, or otherwise messages written in clearly legible, black print. Include such information as name of sender, address, Fax or telephone number.

ANNIVERSARY

The Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of Trenton, Ont. will be celebrating 40 years of God's guidance and faithfulness on Sunday, April 9, 1989, in services of praise and thanksgiving at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Former members are invited to worship with us.

After the morning service there will be fellowship and refreshments. A luncheon will be served to out-of-town guests.

For more information or lodging call the church office at (613) 394-5046 between 9-12 noon or call Mrs. Ria Wiersma at (613) 392-2032 between 5-7 p.m. BEFORE MARCH 31.

Crisis pregnancy home a shelter from the storm



Photo: Nandy Heule

Housemother (l) Irene Davelaar, and Managing Director Frederika Pronk.

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Nandy Heule

In December 1988 *Calvinist Contact* carried a front-page story about senior citizens raising funds for a crisis pregnancy centre in Springfield, Ont. The following tells readers more about that home, *Rehoboth Girls' Home of Refuge and Support*.

Tea with honey and cookies, wedding pictures, a homework-littered living room table, the sounds of a crying baby in the background: Welcome to Rehoboth Girls' Home of Refuge and Support.

Licensed as a Christian maternity home under the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, Rehoboth Home in Springfield, Ont., opened its doors to single young women with crisis pregnancies last May.

Pregnant teens are referred to the home by various professionals or Right-to-Life volunteers from as far away as Kitchener. Women can remain at Rehoboth from early pregnancy to three months post-natal for minimal or no weekly payments based on income.

The Rehoboth ministry is overseen by a 10-member volunteer board. Each board member signs a simple statement of faith and no more than two officers can belong to the same denomination, guaranteeing the ongoing ecumenical nature of the outreach.

Abortion alternative

This Christian shelter was set up to provide an alternative to abortion and aims to address the needs of the whole person: body, mind, and spirit.

Young pregnant women are not "poor little girls" only needing a temporary home. They are "normal teenagers whose pregnancy is often only the tip of the iceberg," says Managing Director Frederika Pronk. "The Christian community realizes the girls need help, but might not know how to help them."

Unwed pregnant women from Christian communities, especially, feel guilty as their crisis is looked upon as a sin, says Pronk about residents who arrive at Rehoboth feeling relieved to get away from their local area.

"These women need acceptance and forgiveness," says Pronk. Some Christian

girls have abortions to avoid hurting their parents with the news about an unwanted pregnancy, she says.

In an effort to reach out to pregnant teens, evangelical Christians from a variety of denominations, including United, Christian Reformed, Baptist, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal churches, pooled their resources in December 1987 to buy a century-old house in tiny Springfield, close to Ingersoll and Aylmer, Ontario.

After extensive renovations the home received its licence to house six residents — moms and babies. And since start-up, eight young women (and seven babies) have received room and board, life skill classes, and counselling for personal and spiritual growth.

Hard work

Esther (not her real name), 18, arrived at Rehoboth four months pregnant last June after receiving a referral from Right-to-Life.

"School friends I used to hang around with told me the baby was going to destroy my life. The first thing which goes through a girl's mind is abortion," says Esther.

Her mother drove her to the maternity home after months passed by and Esther knew "I couldn't do it (the abortion)." She gave birth to David in December and is working on a high school correspondence course.

"My biggest fear has been that I wouldn't go back to school," says Esther. "It is very hard."

Being a stranger to a rural environment made initial adjustments to Rehoboth difficult for Esther, but "too much gossip" in her home

town and caring houseparents persuaded her to stay.

Rehoboth's rural location caused "some concerns," says Pronk, "but the community has been supportive and shelters the girls from some (big city) problems." She says local churches have shown "nothing but kindness," although it's hard for the girls to attend. "Everyone looks at them," says Pronk.

Shepherding

In addition to sheltering girls, Rehoboth also provides counselling and classes to non-residents with crisis pregnancies or single mothers. Some women have been placed in "shepherding homes," temporary housing similar to foster homes for children and teens.

Already, the debt-free agency has started an estimated \$39,000 building renovation project to reduce space-pressures. The project will add an apartment for live-in houseparents through the conversion of an attached garage, and extra living quarters for four more mothers and babies.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) of East Elgin is providing free labour for the project with help of trainees from a job-development program funded by Employment and Immigration Canada.

Fully committed to remaining debt-free, the privately funded agency has now asked the Elgin County Council for financial assistance. However, the home wishes to remain a self-directing Christian outreach even if that means long hours and low pay for staff members. "It has to be a mission," says Pronk.

Nandy Heule has studied journalism at the university of Western Ontario, London, and lives in St. Thomas, Ont.

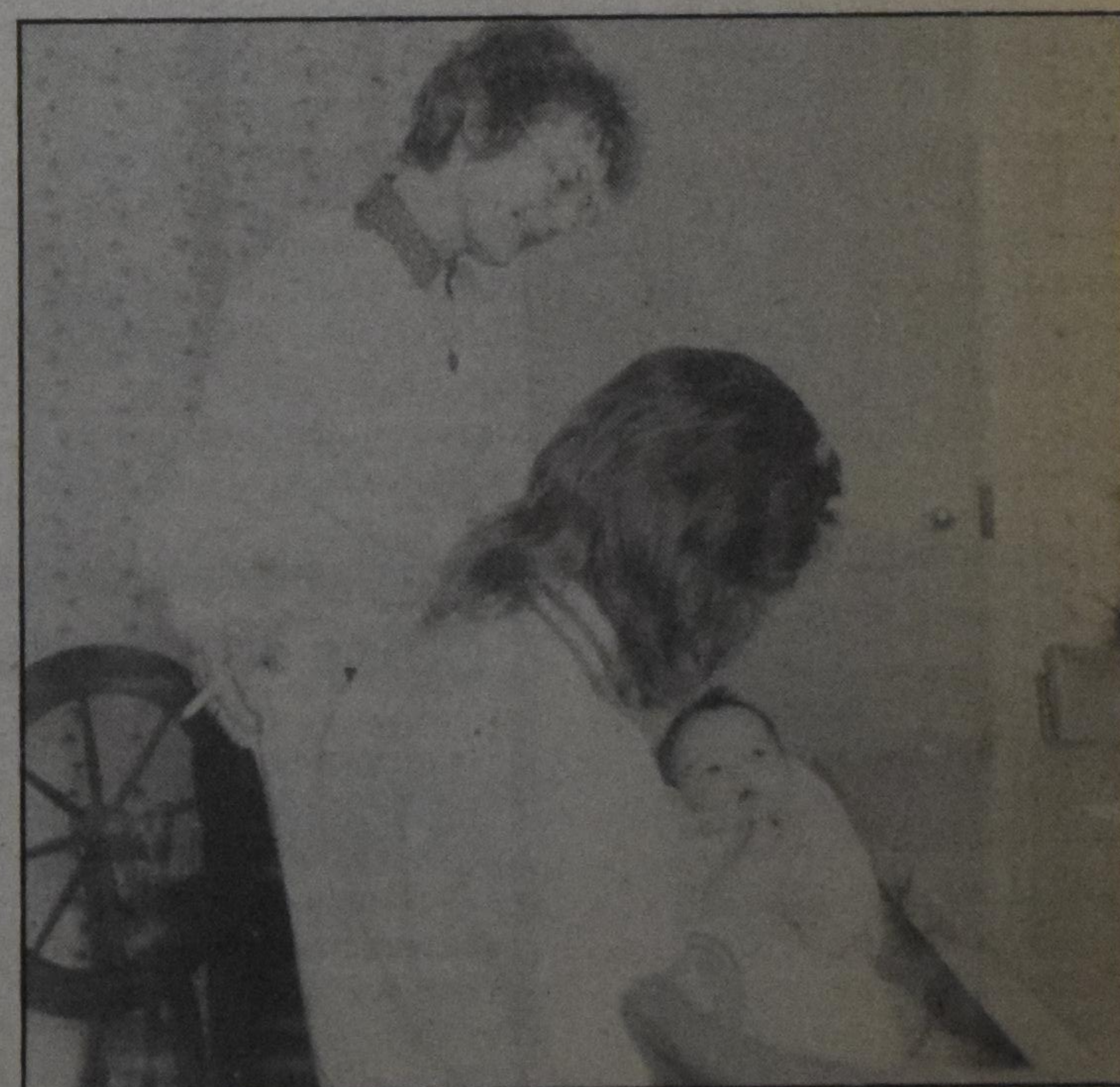
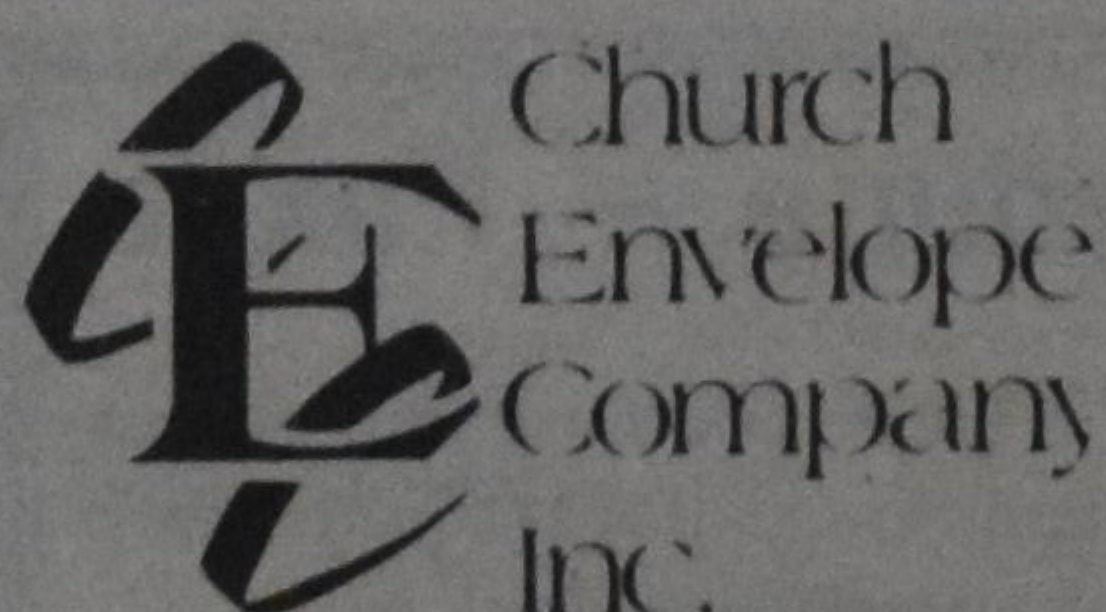


Photo: Nandy Heule

Frederika Pronk, mom with David (three months)



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Home address: Casey and Jane Bydevaate, Box 735, Taber, AB T0K 2G0. DE GROOT: With great joy and thanks to God, William and Joan de Groot announce the birth of their first child, a daughter, ELENA MARGARET, born Feb. 25, 1989. Elena is the second grandchild for Bernard and Susan Korten of Niagara Falls, Ont., and the 11th grandchild for John and Inge de Groot and the late Elena de Groot of Edmonton, Alta. Home address: 3456 Portage Rd., Niagara Falls, ON L2J 2K4. Birthdays 1909 April 5 1989 In his love and grace the Lord has granted 80 years of life to our dear mother and grandmother HETTIE HORLINGS We praise our heavenly Father for his faithfulness throughout these years, and thank him for all he has given to us in mom. We hope to celebrate on her birthday, April 5, D.V. That the Lord will continue to bless her with good health, and surround her with his precious love, is the prayer of her children: Joan & Peter Schaafsma — Brampton David, Michelle, Dan Tom & Helen Horlings — Willowdale Rochelle, Nicole Elsie Horlings — Willowdale Frank & Betty Anne Horlings — Bradford Mark, Curtis, Ryan Walt & Nance Horlings — Plymouth, Mich. Chad, Matthew	Chatham Listowel 1954 April 2 1989 With great joy and thanksgiving to our faithful God, we announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents RALPH and MARY ARENDS (nee Pelleboer) "For today I must abide at thy house." (Luke 19:5b) Glenn & Anita Arends — Listowel Ryan Helen Arends & Fred Heyns (fiance) — Listowel It is our prayer that God will continue to bless you for many more years. Home address: R.R.#1, Listowel, ON N4W 3G6. Oostermeer Athens Friesland Ontario 1939 March 16 1989 With joy and thanksgiving, we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents GERRIT and IKE DEJONG (nee Dykstra) We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them, for each other and for us, for many more years. Catherine & Steward deRoos Yvonne & Peter Mulder Steven, Kimberly Gordon & Patricia deRoos Joanne, Stewart Peter & Corrie DeJong Cindy & Bill Byker Natalie, Holly, Elaine, Jarrod, Carl Frank & Dorothy DeJong Jared, Sheila, Jason, Cheryl, Joseph Barry & Cathy DeJong Daryll, Lindsay, Stephanie Home address: R.R.#4, North Augusta, ON K0G 1R0. 1949 1989 "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him." (Ps. 33:18) With joy and thankfulness to God, we wish to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents HENDRIK and MARGJE OTTEN (nee Stryker) on March 18, 1989. May the Lord be with you in the years to come. Your thankful children and grandchildren: Mark & Jane Otten Joy Lynn, Sandra, Valerie Henry & Mary Otten Tim, Trisha, Stephen, Jeffrey, Dwayne, Marlene Bert & Joyce Otten Marcia, Karen, David, Richard, Jeremy Ed & Jenny Bouman Mandy, Lori-Ann, Julie, Sonya, Robert Home address: R.R.#1, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1.	On March 5, 1989, the Lord took unto himself our mother, grandmother and great-grand-mother NIESJE FLUIT (nee Donker) Psalm 27:4 was her comfort. She was predeceased by her husband Lucas Fluit in 1977. Mother of: Gerry & Swansea Fluit Joan Kennedy & Stan Philips (fiance) Grandmother of: Lou & Irene Fluit Wayne & Marcia DeJong Andy & Brenda Fluit Rob Fluit and eight great-grandchildren. Correspondence address: 39 Wakelin Terr., St. Catharines, ON L2M 4K7. I Know That My Redeemer Lives On Feb. 24, 1989, the Lord called home my dearly beloved husband, father, father-in-law, grand- and great-grandfather REINDER KLEIN at the age of 83 years. Christina M. Klein-Hofstra — Nepean, Ont. Ton & Nettie — New Market, Ont. John & Gerda — Ottawa, Ont. Nelly & Cor — Amsterdam, the Neth. George & Lucy — Pierrefonds, Que. Rein & Diane — Woodbridge, Ont. Gerard & Ria — Kendal, Ont. Albert & Wined — Brussels, Belgium Frits & Janice — Nepean, Ont. 27 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral service was held Feb. 27, 1989, at Calvin Chr. Ref. Church, Ottawa, Ont., Rev. John Kerssies officiating.	Het Consulaat-Generaal zou gaarne in contact willen komen met de navolgende personen: VAN BALLEGOOIJEN, Anton Leendert, geboren op 24 oktober 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: W.G.F. Thomassenweg 29, Rheden. Naar Canada geemigreerd op 13 juni 1955. BRUINHORST-VAN DEN BRINK, Alijda, geboren op 3 mei 1940 te Barneveld, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Graafhorstweg 24, Barneveld. Naar Canada geemigreerd op 29 juli 1983 met mogelijke bestemming Alberta. DUYKER, Berendina Johanna, geboren op 11 januari 1948 te Amsterdam. Naar Canada vertrokken op 29 mei 1954 met bestemming Toronto. VAN DEN HOEK, Hans Arjen, geboren op 5 oktober 1938. Naar Canada vertrokken op 15 juni 1964. VAN HOEVEN, Gerardus Jacobus Maria, geboren op 21 oktober 1923, laatste woonplaats in Nederland: Haelen. Naar Canada vertrokken op 29 september 1955. JORRITSMA, Ids, geboren op 20 oktober 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Wearklane te Stiens. Naar Canada vertrokken op 2 juli 1952. KATER, Daniel Emiel, geboren op 14 augustus 1940. Laatstbekende verblijfplaats in Canada: Vancouver of omgeving in B.C. KIEVEN, Ludovicus Johannes Antonius, geboren op 13 juni 1930, laatstbekende verblijfplaats in Canada: Burlington, Ont. (1962). KLEIN NIBBELINK, Hendrik Jan, geboren op 27 december 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Landstraat 4, Bredevoort. Naar Canada vertrokken op 5 oktober 1956. VAN DER KRUIT, Marianne, geboren op 4 november 1959 te Rotterdam, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Mantelschelp 15, Hellevoetsluis. Naar Canada vertrokken op 4 november 1987. LENSINK, Albert Jan, geboren op 15 oktober 1941 te Bathmen, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Deventerweg 32, Bathem. Naar Canada vertrokken op 8 augustus 1966. LEVEN OF LEVY, Sander, in 1929 naar Canada geemigreerd met bestemming Winnipeg. Later verhuisd naar White Horse, NWT. Betrokkene is omstreeks 80 jr. oud. VAN DE MAAT, Egbert, geboren op 6 december 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: F 17, Marle. Naar Canada vertrokken op 28 maart 1950. MESTERS, Anna Maria (gehuwd met A. Dobrouszky) en Elisabeth Hubertina Petronella, resp. geboren op 17 juli 1928 te Wylre en 4 maart 1937 te Maastricht. Naar Canada vertrokken op resp. de volgende data: 6 augustus 1951 en 18 mei 1961. PIEROELIE, Edwin Samuel, geboren op 13 juni 1969 te Amsterdam. Betrokkene is omstreeks maart 1975 met zijn moeder naar Canada vertrokken. ROOS, Johannes Gerrit, geboren op 15 maart 1916 te Den Haag. Laatstbekende adres in Canada: 6361 Fielding, apt. #1, Montreal, P.Q. In Canada gearriveerd op 12 mei 1948. SCHONBERGER of SCHONBERGEN, W.I.E., geboren rond 1932, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: van Hoeylaan, Den Haag. SMIT, Gerrit Hendrik, geboren op 5 januari 1924, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Lorentzstraat 489, Zandvoort. Naar Canada vertrokken op 24 februari 1978. NETHERLANDS CONSULATE GENERAL 1 Dundas St. West, Suite #2106, Box 2, Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3 Tel. (416) 598-2520
Thanks BAKKER: We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all who celebrated our wedding day with us, also many thanks for the cards and letters we received. "It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to thy name, O most high." (Ps. 92:1) Hanna and Eelke Bakker.			Real Estate <div>Moving to or from Thunder Bay? Call Don Ten Have (807) 577-4810 Representing Midwest Realty Limited (807) 623-7404</div> <div>ADA REALTY LTD. 6012 Ada Blvd. Edmonton, AB T5W 4N9 (403) 471-1814 <i>Sid Vandermeulen</i> Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district. <i>Het vertrouwde adres.</i></div>	Personals Single Men and Women If you are over 21 years of age and would like to find a partner in Christian marriage, write to: Christian Marriage Contact Service, P.O. Box 1127, Station B, Burlington, ON L7P 3S9. Please enclose \$3.00 for a complete information package explaining our services. Established in 1967. Single man, early 40s, young looking, 5'7" tall, wishes to meet a Christian lady who is between the age of 25-45 years and lives in Ontario. Reply with photo, if possible, including phone number to File #2516, c/o Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

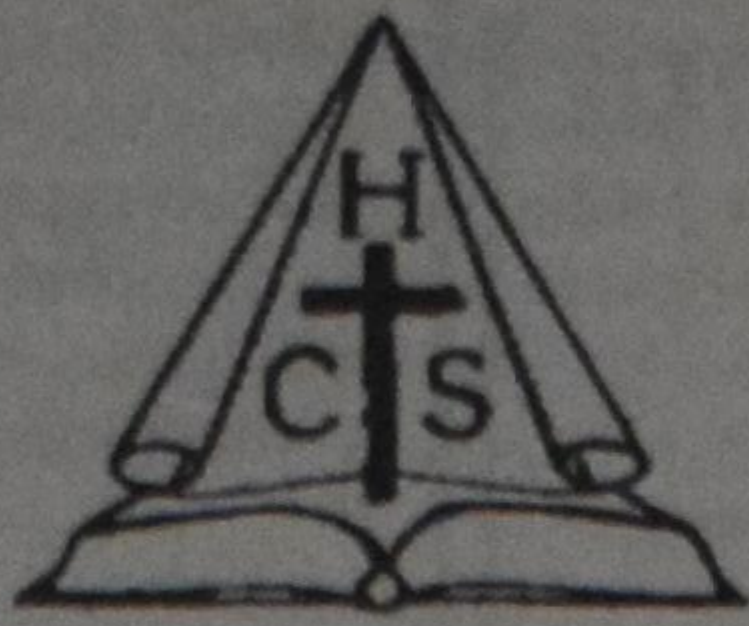
Lang's Resort
R.R. #3, Box C, Roseneath, ON
K0K 2X0
Phone: (416) 352-2308

Classified

Help wanted	Help wanted	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers			
<div><h3>Dordt College</h3><p>invites applications for a tenure track position in physical education</p><p>Applicants must have at least a master's degree in physical education with an emphasis in exercise science and other health-related areas. Other assignments include coaching women's volleyball and women's softball.</p><p>Qualified individuals who are committed to a biblical, Reformed theology and educational perspective are invited to send resume, academic credentials, and references to:</p><div><div>Dr. Douglas Ribbens Vice Pres. for Academic Affairs Dordt College Sioux Center, IA 51250</div></div><p><small>Dordt College is an EO/AA employer</small></p></div>	<div><h3>DORDT COLLEGE</h3><p>invites applications for possible openings in Chemistry, Physics, English, Philosophy, History</p><p>The doctorate is required and college teaching experience is preferred.</p><p>Qualified individuals who are committed to a biblical, Reformed theology and educational perspective are invited to send resume, academic credentials, and references to:</p><div><div>Dr. Douglas Ribbens Vice Pres. for Academic Affairs Dordt College Sioux Center, IA 51250</div></div><p><small>Dordt College is an EO/AA employer</small></p></div>	<div><h3>The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee of Canada</h3><p>is seeking candidates for The Director of CRWRC of Canada</p><p>The Director is administratively responsible for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee of Canada, and functions within the boundaries of synodical mandates and board directed purposes, policies, job descriptions, and standards of performance.</p><p>The position requires a person known to share the love for the church of Jesus Christ and for the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church and its several outreach agencies. The person must possess a sense of compassion for the oppressed, a prophetic distaste for that which dehumanizes man, a concern for those not yet reached by the Gospel message, and a vision for extending the church and God's Kingdom. This person must possess a deserved reputation for integrity.</p><p>The position requires a demonstrated competence in the areas of leadership, management and innovation.</p><p>Please send resumes before April 30th to the President, CRWRC of Canada at the address below.</p><div>CRWRC of Canada 3475 Mainway, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 (416) 336-2920</div></div>	<div><h3>Brantford Christian School</h3><p>invites applications for full-time teachers for the school year 1989/90 as follows:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">— Kindergarten (3 days a week)— Primary grades— Upper elementary (possible opening)<p>Ability to teach French would be considered an asset. Brantford is a community with affordable housing and is only a 15-20 min. drive to Redeemer College or Hamilton.</p><p>Please forward resume to: Mr. C. VanderVeen, Principal Brantford Christian School 7 Calvin St., Brantford, ON N3S 3E4 Phone: (519) 752-0433 (school) or (519) 752-4100 (home)</p></div>	<div><h3>Toronto District Christian High School</h3><p>invites applications for definite openings in Science, mathematics and English and for possible openings in Physical and Health Education, Accounting, History and Music</p><p>Please send a complete resume to: Mr. W. Barneveld, Principal 7900 Kipling Ave., Woodbridge, ON L4L 1Z5 Phone (416) 851-1772</p></div>	<div><h3>Regional Teacher Interview Day</h3><h4>Knox Christian School</h4><p>in Bowmanville, Ontario, is hosting a Regional Teacher Interview Day for various Christian schools located in the rapidly growing greater Durham region east of Toronto on Saturday, April 1.</p><p>Interested applicants for any of the following positions, please submit letters of application and resumes directly to the schools involved before March 24 and indicate whether or not you are available for this interview date.</p><div><h4>Knox Christian — Bowmanville</h4><p>... has a definite opening for a junior or intermediate level teacher with the ability to teach French to the upper grades. Principal: William M. Helmus (416) 623-5871 R.R. 1, Scugog St., Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2</p><h4>Durham Christian High — Bowmanville</h4><p>... seeks applications for two full-time positions: 1) English 2) Math and Girls Phys. Ed. Principal: Ren Siebenga (416) 623-5940 R.R. 1, Scugog St., Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2</p><h4>Immanuel Christian — Oshawa</h4><p>... has a possible opening for a Grade 5/6 teacher, preference will be given to applicants with special ability and interest in Phys. Ed. ... a possible opening for a Grade 4 teacher. ... a possible part-time opening for Special Education & Remedial. Principal: Jim Rooks (416) 728-9071 849 Rossland Rd. W., Oshawa, ON L1H 7K4</p><h4>Rhema Christian — Peterborough</h4><p>... has a definite opening in the primary grades. ... a possible opening in Grade 7/8, preference will be given to applicants with strength in French. Principal: Ray Hendriks (705) 743-1400 3195 Parkhill Rd. E., Peterborough, ON K9L 1B8</p><h4>Scugog Christian — Port Perry</h4><p>... seeks applications for a teaching principal, with a Grade 5/6 class as the teaching assignment. ... has a definite opening for a Grade 1/2 teacher. Board Chairman: George Eenling (416) 985-0562 6 Mary St., Prince Albert, ON L0B 1P0</p></div></div>	<div><h3>TRENTON, Ont.: Trenton Christian School</h3><p>invites applications for September 1989. We anticipate a half-time opening for either Grade 1 or resource and possible openings in the junior and intermediate levels. Please send all letters of inquiry or application to: Hugo Marcus, Principal, Trenton Christian School, 20 Fourth Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N3. Phone (613) 392-3600.</p><div><h3>WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Christian School.</h3><p>We have possible openings in the primary and intermediate divisions. Please direct your inquiries and resume to: R. VanderPloeg, Principal, John Knox Christian School, 800 Juliana Drive, P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8. Phone school (519) 539-1492 or home (519) 539-2117.</p></div></div>	<div><h3>For Rent</h3><div><h3>Want to rent a car while in Holland?</h3><p>Jan Kalma has the key to all forms of car rentals.</p><p>Will deliver car to Amsterdam airport if desired.</p><div>jan kalma<p>De Meer 24, 9201 EZ Drachten The Netherlands — Tel. (31) 5120-15199 Fax (31) 5120-32324</p></div></div></div> <div><h3>ADDRESS CHANGE</h3><div><p>Please use this form and allow four weeks for processing request.</p><p>Attach your present label here.</p><p>Please indicate when new address takes effect.</p></div><div><p>Effective: _____</p><p>Name: _____</p><p>New Address: _____</p><p>City: _____</p><p>Prov.: _____</p><p>Code: _____</p><p>mail to: CALVINIST CONTACT 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p></div></div>

Classified/News

Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Help wanted
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Heritage Christian School

is in need of a teaching

PRINCIPAL

for the 1989/90 school term. Prospective applicants should have both teaching and administrative experience in Christian education.

The school is an attractive new facility and has been in operation for the past 11 years, providing Christ-centred education to students in Kindergarten through Grade 8.

If you feel qualified to accept this leadership challenge, please direct your letter of application to:

Mr. Bill Buwalda, Board Chairman
Heritage Christian School Society
159 Colborne Street West, Lindsay, ON K9V 5Z8
Telephone (705) 324-8363

Calvin Christian School, Hamilton

invites applications for the following positions effective September 1989

Grade 1/2, Grade 2, and Grade 7/8 and part-time special education (60%)

C.C.S. has served the Christian community of the greater Hamilton area since 1952 and anticipates an enrolment of 375 students for the coming school year. If you would like to join a dynamic teaching team offering quality Christian education, please send your resume to:

Mr. A. Ben Harsevoort, Principal
Calvin Christian School
547 West 5th Street, Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: (416) 338-2645

Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Cornwall, Ont., is seeking a new pastor. Please send inquiries and resume to: Search Committee, c/o Tim Vander Veer, 3304 Duval St., Cornwall, ON K6K 1C4.

Three King's College professors appointed Adjunct Faculty at the University of Alberta

EDMONTON — For a number of years, professors in the natural sciences at The King's College, a Christian liberal arts college in Edmonton, have been actively collaborating with their colleagues at the University of Alberta in scientific research projects.

The University of Alberta has recently recognized these collaborative research efforts by appointing three King's faculty members as Adjunct Professors. Dr. Harry Cook received the appointment in the department of Zoology, Dr. Ken Newman in the department of Chemistry, and Dr. Hank Bestman in the department of Plant Science.

The Adjunct professorships recognize the contributions King's faculty members make to research at the university, and also make these scientists eligible to apply for certain research grants under the auspices of the university. The arrangement also facilitates communication and interchange by way of presentation of seminars, colloquia, and other scholarly lectures.

With the recent accreditation of a three-year Bachelor of Science degree program, The King's College is rapidly developing its science offerings and currently has five full-time faculty members in the natural sciences, with a sixth position to be filled this summer. The strong links established with science departments at the University of Alberta will continue to contribute to the excellence of science offerings at the College.

For Sale

For Sale



COMFORT & JOY

A practical commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism. By Andrew Kuyvenhoven, Editor of The Banner. \$12.45 CDN

New from CRC Publications
3475 Mainway, Box 5070
Burlington, Ont. L7R 3Y8

(416) 336-2920

The Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta is now accepting applications for the following positions:

Taber Christian School

Junior High French/Social Studies

Forward all correspondence to:

Mr. B. Reitsma, Principal
P.O. Box 2256, Taber, AB T0K 2G0
Tel.: (403) 223-4550

Immanuel Christian School

**Elementary — Primary, Intermediate
Secondary — Music, instrumental and vocal,
Language Arts/Physical Education**

Forward all correspondence to:

Mr. H. Konijn, Principal
802 - 6th Ave. N., Lethbridge, AB T1H 0S1
Tel.: (403) 327-4223

Smithville Christian High School

invites applications for one definite and three possible teaching positions for the 1989/90 school year. The vacancy exists in **Bible** and **art**, with combinations of courses in **physical education, geography, family studies, science, math, English and drama** for the three possible positions.

We are specifically interested in a teacher who is able to teach courses at the basic level.

Please send all inquiries and resumes to:

M.B. Strooboscher, Principal
Smithville Christian High School
Box 310, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
Phone (416) 957-3255

Stouffville Christian School

requires teachers for the primary, junior and intermediate divisions for the 1989/90 school year.

Please send resume to:

Mr. Wallace Robinson, Principal
Stouffville Christian School
R.R.#3, Claremont, ON L0H 1E0
Phone (416) 640-3297

The Holy Spirit

RENEWING
AND EMPOWERING
PRESENCE



George Vandervelde, editor
Introduction by Clark Pincock

Contributions by Richard Mouw, Jan Veenhof, Richard Gaffin, James D.G. Dunn, Garth Wilson and George Vandervelde.

This book offers fresh insights on the Holy Spirit from the perspective of Reformed theology. The aim is to deepen our understanding of the calling of God's people in the church and the world.

PUBLISHED BY WOOD LAKE BOOKS

Available from the Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street, Toronto, ON M5T 1R4 and
from local bookstores.
\$13.95 plus \$1.50 for mailing

**For
Crossword
Puzzle
see next
week's
issue**

Events/News

Mozambique appeal underway with \$39,000

GRAND RAPIDS (REC) — The first assistance for Mozambique refugees has been sent in response to an urgent appeal from the REC Interim Committee. Large gifts from two REC member churches, the Reformed Churches of Australia and the Christian Reformed Church in North America, make up the bulk of \$39,000 donated to date. The

relief agencies of both churches allocated the funds.

The group the REC is assisting is a group of about 20,000 people from the Reformed Church of Mozambique, who are currently living in Malawi. Most have fled their homes with little more than the clothes they were wearing.

The appeal is attempting to raise funds primarily for blankets, clothing, and a small food supplement in addition to those provided by other relief agencies. As colder weather approaches in March and April in Malawi, the need for assistance becomes more urgent.

The interim committee set a target of \$120,000 for the appeal, and a small pamphlet was sent to member churches in December. Additional copies are available from the REC secretariat.

*Why not place
your
ad here?*

The Committee of Concerned Members (Niagara Chapter)

invites the public to hear Rev. Ed Knott from Grand Rapids, Mich., to speak on

"The reason for our concern in the CRC"

March 30, 1989, at the Bethany CRC, Fenwick, and March 31, 1989, at the CRC, Springdale, Ont.

Both meetings start at 8 p.m.

CONVENTION — 1989 of the Canadian Federation of Christian Reformed Women

Date: May 10, 1989

Place: Bramalea Baptist Church (corner Highway #7 and Dixie Road)

Speakers: Rev. Harry A. Van der Windt, Mrs. Donna Lee Walter

Theme: Standing on God's Promises

Tickets: send cheque and stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Mrs. Sandra Van Kruistum, 183 Stonebrook Drive, Kitchener, ON N2M 4L8.

Price: \$8 per ticket (no phone orders accepted)

DEADLINE FOR TICKETS: APRIL 1, 1989

Calendar of Events

- Mar. 19 Dutch service, led by Rev. R. J. Sikkema, at 3 p.m. in the CRC, Ancaster, Ont.
- Mar. 22 Stained Glass Concert "Beautifully Bach" featuring the Hamilton Philharmonic (Boris Brott, conductor), and Redeemer College Choir (Christiaan Teeuwssen, conductor) and soloists. At 8 p.m. in the Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont.
- Mar. 24 Evening of song and praise at 8 p.m. in the United Church, Listowel, Ont. Organized by Palmerston CR Choral Society.
- Mar. 24 Easter concert by the choirs "The Christ Everlasting" and "Praise the Lord" at 8 p.m. in the Second CRC, Brampton, Ont.
- Mar. 24 "Kom Nu Met Zang," an evening of Dutch songs and hymns at 7:30 p.m. in the Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, Ont. Participants: Fred Deys, John Vanderlaan, Rev. Henry De Moor, Dick De Kleine and Grace Meester.
- Mar. 25 Concert by the famous "Canadian Orpheus Male Choir" at 8 p.m. in Bethel CRC Acton, Ont. For tickets call (519) 853-1757 or 853-2393.
- Mar. 25 Concert by the "Mountainview Singers" and the Vineland Mennonite Brethren Senior Choir. At 8 p.m. in the Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont. Free will offering.
- Mar. 30 CFFO Provincial Board meeting from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the CRC, Georgetown, Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.), or (519) 338-3214 (p.m.).
- Mar. 30-31 CCM-sponsored public meetings on March 30: 8 p.m. in Bethany CRC, Fenwick, Ont. and March 31: 8 p.m. in CRC, Springdale, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Ed Knott on: "The reason for our concern in the CRC."
- Apr. 1 Christian Family Support Group (for the long-term mentally ill) meets at 10:30 a.m., Banquet Room, Christian Horizons, Elmira, Ont. For info. call Gerry Denbok at (416) 639-1075 or 637-9151 (bus.)
- Apr. 1 Massed Choral Concert by the combined choirs of Stratford and Woodstock with Andre Knevel at the organ. At 7:30 p.m. in the Knox Presb. Church, Stratford, Ont. Free will offering.
- Apr. 8 Festival of Praise. Spring concert by seven Ontario Christian Male Choirs. At 7:30 p.m. in St. Paul's Anglican Church, 227 Bloor St. E., Toronto, Ont. Tickets \$8.00 per person.
- Apr. 8-22 Spring Concerts by Leendert Kooy's OCMA with Andre Knevel at the organ. Apr. 8: at 8 p.m. in Rehoboth CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; Apr. 15: at 8 p.m. in Wellington Square United Church, Burlington, Ont.; Apr. 22: at 8 p.m. in Willowdale United Church, Willowdale, Ont. For tickets call (416) 636-9779.
- Apr. 9 40th Anniversary of the Ebenezer CRC, Trenton, Ont. Special services at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. For info. call (613) 394-5046 or 392-2032.

Festival of Praise

Ontario Christian Male Choirs Spring Concert

April 8th, 1989 7:30 p.m.

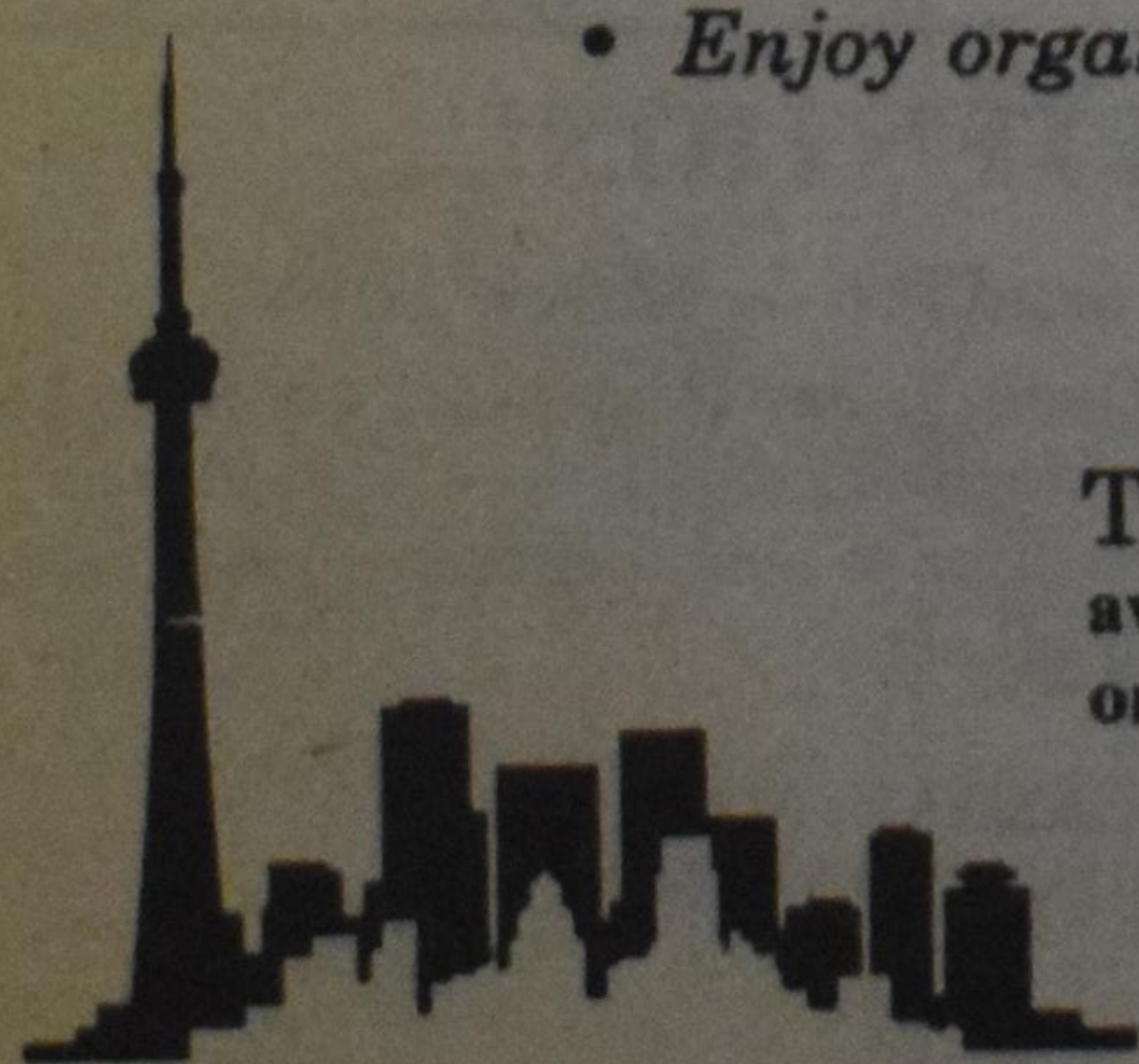
- Doors open at 7:00 p.m. -

St. Paul's Anglican Church, 227 Bloor St. East, Toronto

- Plenty of parking at Manufacturers Life lot, 250 Bloor St. E. -

- Hear male choirs from : Brampton Burlington
Chatham Hamilton
Sarnia St. Catharines
St. Thomas

- Host Choir: "The Choraliers" - Brampton
- Enjoy organ, brass and audience participation.



Tickets: \$8.00 per person
available at the door or from Choir Members,
or mail \$8.00 per ticket to:

"Festival of Praise"
7900 McLaughlin Rd. Apt. H702
Brampton, Ontario L6V 3N2
(or call (416) 873-1643 for information)

Trinity Christian School

Burlington, Ontario

plans to celebrate it's 25th Anniversary (1964-1989)

D.V., the weekend of September 22-24, 1989

(more information will follow later from the Anniversary Committee)

ATTENTION

former teachers, students, members, and friends of
Trinity Christian School

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Help us by sharing your experiences and old pictures for our
Anniversary book

Deadline May 26, 1989

Send all material to Trinity Christian School Anniversary Committee

Fred R. Vander Velde, Chairman

2621 Cavendish Drive, Burlington, ON L7P 3W6

Telephone (416) 336-5619

MID-AMERICA

REFORMED SEMINARY CONFERENCES

"Christ Will Build His Church"

Pompton Plains (NJ) CRC:

March 17 — 7:30 p.m.; March 18 — 9 a.m.

Speakers: Rev. Robert Grossman and Rev. Nelson Kloosterman

Aylmer (Ontario) CRC:

March 18 — 9 a.m.

Speakers: Dr. Cornel Venema and Rev. Mark Vander Hart.

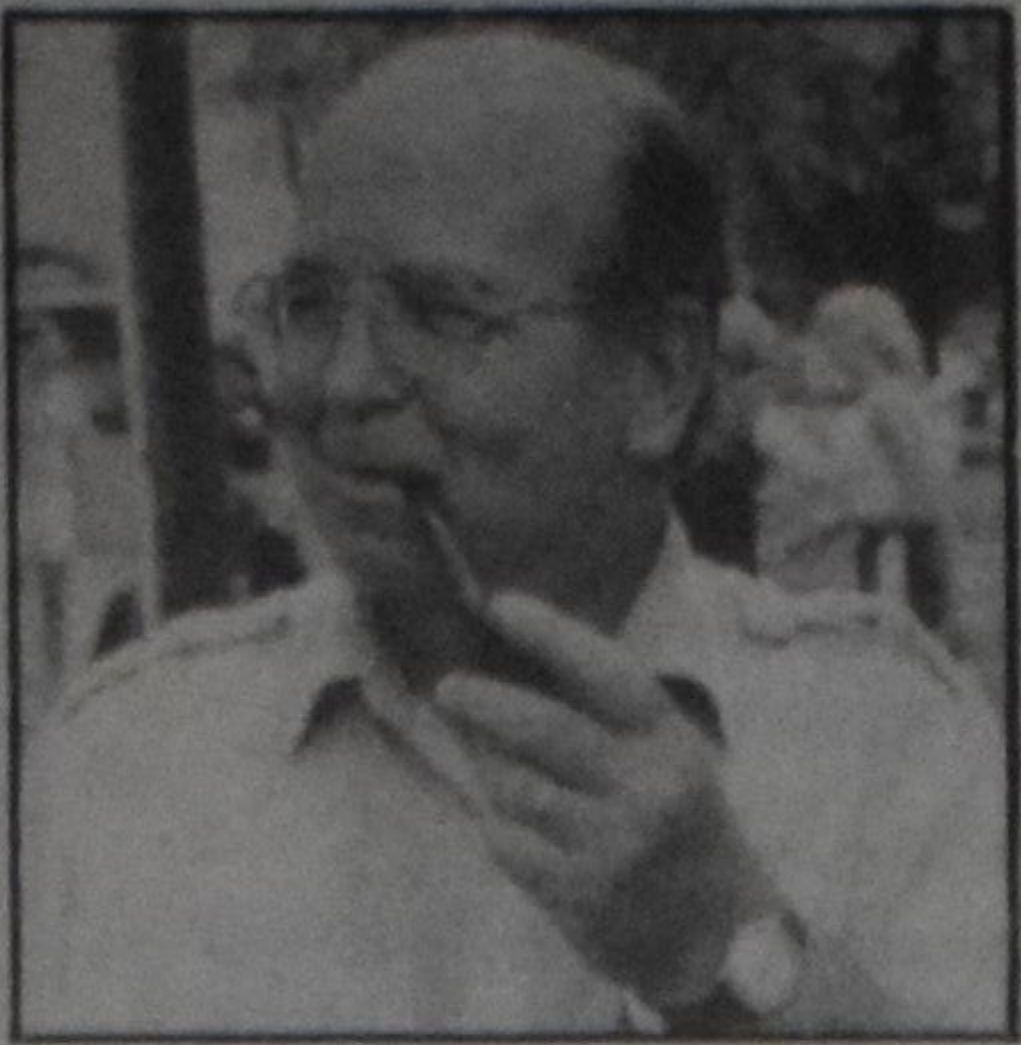
Cost: \$10 per person; \$15 per couple. For info. call (712) 737-3446

DUTCH SERVICE

PLACE: Ancaster CRC, #70 Highway 53 East, Ancaster (approx. 2 km west of Redeemer College)

DATE: Sunday Mar. 19, 1989 TIME: 3:00 p.m.

PASTOR: Rev. Raymond J. Sikkema



Kommentaar met een knipoog

Herman de Jong

Gewoon leuk ...

Er zijn veel dingen die 'gewoon leuk' zijn. Ik vind het gewoon leuk om het orgel in een kerk te bespelen. Mijn vrouw vindt het gewoon leuk om elke vrijdag het huis een goede beurt te geven. Als nou het hele leven es 'gewoon leuk' was. Dat zou toch aardig zijn ... dat zou toch leuk zijn!

Je kunt je daar natuurlijk op in gaan spelen. Want voor een Christen hoort het toch zo te zijn, dat elke dag weer een verrassing is, dat het gewoon leuk is naar elke nieuwe dag te verlangen, en gewoon leuk om de dag van gisteren met genoegen te herinneren. Je zou dan plezier moeten hebben in elke handeling die je verrichtte of nog gaat verrichten. Dan denk je met een glimlach terug

aan al de dingen die je niet zo gemakkelijk afgaan, zoals het wassen van vele borden na een maaltijd. Dan kijk je met een schaterlach het invullen van lastige belasting-papieren tegemoet ... gewoon leuk.

Misschien moesten we het leven gewoon wat leuker vinden. Per slot van rekening: je hebt maar één aards leven van de Heer gekregen en daar moet je toch het beste van

maken. Is het eigenlijk niet zo, dat we ons teveel zorgen in onze hoofden halen, door ons steeds maar weer voor ogen te spiegelen dat wij, arme zondaren, met een last rondsjouwen en die last ons leven en onze verrichtingen laten bepalen? Terwijl God toch elke nieuwe dag, mits je er om vraagt, die last van ons afneemt en ons onbeperkte vrijheid geeft een nieuw, vrolijk begin te maken.

Hollende maatschappij

Wij zijn er aan gewend geraakt dat we moeten hollen.

We denken dat we anders niet mee kunnen doen. De hele economische mikmak is ingesteld op hollen. Als je niet met spoed meeholt gaat het verkeerd met je. Dan ga je je schamen voor de burens, dat je nog steeds met die oude meubeltjes zit. We verwachten van onze kinderen dat ze het beter zullen hebben dan wij, en zijn er tuk op dat ze goede cijfers behalen in school, college of universiteit. Want gewoonlijk betekent goed verstand en rijke kennis dat ze het wel zullen maken in de maatschappij.

En zo gaan onze lieve kindertjes ook al op hol ... en daar komen vaak brokken van, want jammer genoeg zijn er nog steeds minder begaafde kinderen, en kroost dat ademloos verrukt zich urenlang kan bezig houden met muziek of andere esthetische dingen. Nou, je moet zulke kinderen maar blijven porren: krijgen ze lekker een minderwaardigheidsgevoel met alle nare gevolgen van dien!

En het uiteindelijke resultaat is dat zij, net als de voorgaande generatie, weer gaan hollen, hun vele plichten niet zullen verzaken, en nou nooit es wat dingen doen die 'gewoon leuk' zijn.

Geen vroom antwoord

Opeen van onze 'Friendship Clubs' zag ik een meiske van zo fijn bezig met haar zwakzinnige vriendin. Thuis had ze hopen huiswerk liggen. Ik vroeg haar wat ze er nou wel in zag om dit werk vrijwillig te doen. Weet u wat ze antwoordde? "Nou ja ... 't is gewoon leuk!"

Ik zei: "Nergens anders om?", er op uit een wat meer Christelijk antwoord van haar te krijgen. Zo als: ik moet bezig zijn in het Koninkrijk van onze Heer Jesus. Of: ik doe dit uit dankbaarheid omdat ik me kind van God mag weten. Nee, het was en het bleef: gewoon leuk!

Ze was lief ... dat meisje! Ze had een stralende levenslust ... op mystieke wijze zag je aan haar dat ze dicht bij Jezus

leefde. Maar daar praatte ze niet over, hoefde ze ook niet over te praten, want uit haar 'nou ... ja, gewoon leuk' liefdeswerk straalde de liefde van en tot Jezus.

Strijden en lijden

Ik denk dat we heel wat dingen in ons leven meer 'gewoon leuk' moesten vinden. Waarom moeten we er altijd zo zwaar aan tornen? Waar is ons plezier in het leven gebleven? Ach, ik weet het wel ... het is niet zo eenvoudig. 'Gewoon leuk' komt zo vaak niet aan bod omdat er zo ontzettend wordt geleden rondom ons.

We blijven maar in eigen huis en kerk. Je kunt dat lijden toch niet omzeilen en net doen of er niets aan de hand is? We strijden onze strijd tegen de zonde in ons, en we houden de strijd om een ware kerk en leer angstvallig in de gaten. En als je dan ook nog bij het ouder worden allerlei pijnlijke dingen voelen, dan is het leven toch niet zo leuk meer. Misschien is het beter dat we met ernstiger gezichten gaan rondlopen. Want het is toch maar een ernstige zaak

Ik herinner me dat ik als kind altijd dacht dat Christenen heel blijde mensen waren. Op school zongen we daar liedjes over. Ik was toen een nogal ernstig jongetje, en die vrolijkheid, nou dat leek me wel wat!

Weet u, ik ga tegenwoordig elke dag zwemmen, niet omdat het 'gewoon leuk' is, maar omdat het moet van de dokter. Soms ontmoet ik daar een groep mensen, die het grootste plezier hebben. Ik veronderstel niet dat al die zwemlustigen Christenen zijn. Soms ben ik wat jaloers op hen. Ik weet het wel, een zwembad is geen kerk, maar het plezier van deze zwemmende wereldlingen zie ik niet zo vaak in de kerk of onder kerkmensen. Geven we wel genoeg gelegenheid tot 'vrolijk zijn in de Heer'?

Ik vond het 'gewoon leuk' hierover te schrijven.

Herman de Jong woont in Jordan Station, Ont.



Wie viel U het eerst op, Cindy, of haar vergezel?

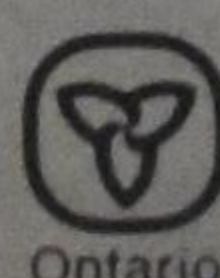
"Onder ons zijn de omstandigheden die het blind zijn met zich mee brengen, niet zo erg zoals U zich die voorstelt. Wij zijn net zoals U. Het enige wat ontbreekt, is dat wij niet kunnen zien. Dat neemt niet weg, dat wij alternatieve wegen kennen die ons verder helpen op weg naar een net zo gelukkig en onafhankelijk bestaan."

Cindy gelooft dat haar zingen in de kerk en andere interesse die zij heeft, haar de moed hoog houden.

Net zoals 937,000 andere volwassenen, die in Ontario wonen en werken, leeft Cindy met een handicap, maar zij laat zich haar blindheid niet in de weg staan! Dus waarom zouden wij!

Wees begrijpend!

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ATTENTION!

Advertising deadline — March 31 issue

During the week of Good Friday (March 24) our staff has only four days during which to prepare the March 31 issue. We appeal to our advertisers to send their materials in early. Please observe these deadlines:

DISPLAY ADS — TUESDAY, MARCH 21
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Stan de Jong
Manager

Zijn lof in de nacht

Kijkjes in de CRC van gisteren en vandaag



(1)

Wordt vervolgd

Tini Van Ameyde

Ze waren genoemd, heel origineel, de First, de Second en de Third Church. Nou, wie kon daarmee in de war raken? Toen mijn man en ik in de zomer van 1952 in Edmonton, Alberta, arriveerden vonden we daar drie CR kerken. De eerste twee hadden een dominee. De derde was nog zagezegd in de luiers en werd verzorgd door "home missionaries." Dominee van de First Church — die uit 1910 stamde — was de welbekende predikant J.K. Van Baalen. (Inderdaad: de man die het boek *Chaos of Cults* schreef!) Hij overleed in 1968. Predikant van de één-jaar-oude Second Church was Rev. John C. Verbrugge, inmiddels ook overleden, maar voortlevend in onze herinnering als een toegewijde herder van kerkleden die vaak veel moeite hadden om in het vreemde land aan de slag te komen.

Nu, in februari 1989, zijn er in Edmonton 10 CR kerken, plus drie in de onmiddellijke omtrek: St. Albert, Stony Plain, en Leduc. Praat over uitbreiding! Het ironische in de situatie is dat onze Second Church midden in al die groei en uitbreiding de geest gegeven heeft.

Droevig einde

Ze was gevestigd in de binnenstad, in dezelfde straat als de First Church en een dozijn andere kerken. Het was op de duur de enige kerk in Edmonton waar je nog gasten van overzee, die geen Engels spraken, mee naar toe kon nemen. Elke zondagmiddag was er een speciale dienst in het Nederlands. Sommige mensen gingen daar ook graag naar toe zonder gasten, om de geliefde oude kerkliederen te zingen o.l.v. "vader" De Boon en te luisteren naar het gevoelsvolle orgelspel van broeder Lambertus Van Essen.

Maar enkele jaren geleden werd, om allerlei redenen, besloten om het zelfstandige bestaan van deze gemeente te beëindigen. De meeste leden voegden zich toen bij de First of

de Third Church. Het was een droef einde voor Rev. Verbrugge's dappere kerk. En soms denk ik, als ik het treurende torentje in de verte zie opdoemen: Jammer! Had dat nu niet anders kunnen gaan?

De meeste immigranten uit Nederland arriveerden tussen 1950 en '60. Dit betekent dat zij die lid werden van een gereformeerde kerk, daar nu zo'n 35 jaar hun steentje bijgedragen hebben. Het betekent ook dat vele gemeenten aan het "vergrijzen" zijn. De energieke jonge mensen van '54 zijn zilverharige en kale grootouders geworden. De stamelende nieuwkomers, die zo hard moesten zwoegen om een bestaan op te bouwen, zijn nu doorgewinterde Canadezen: ze spreken overal een vloeiend woordje mee, zelfs in de politiek.

God van Nederland

Daar we binnenkort ook in C.C. onze moedertaal niet meer zullen zien leek het me een geschikt moment om een (enigszins ondeugende) blik te slaan in onze kerkelijke kring op gereformeerde grondslag. Of moet ik zeggen: op geïmporteerde grondslag? Want we kunnen ons nu wel echt Canadees voelen en zo, maar één ding staat als een paal boven water: ons kerkelijk leven is nog ten nauwste verweven met het feit dat wij, of onze ouders, uit Nederland kwamen. De manier waarop wij de Bijbel bij voorkeur — en vaak alleen — aan tafel lezen, de eredienst zien, de Heideberger hooghouden, enz. is niet los te maken van onze achtergrond.

Ja, de God die wij dienen woont in zekere zin nog steeds achter de duinen. In een land zo klein dat je er naar moet zoeken op de wereldkaart. Het gevaar hier is natuurlijk dat we daarom ook van God te klein kunnen denken, alsof Hij gebonden zou zijn aan de gezichtspunten en tradities waarmee wij opgegroeid zijn. We verliezen dan uit het oog

hoe groot Hij werkelijk is en hoe ver zijn barmhartigheid reikt.

Vergrijzende gemeente

Voorzover mij bekend is Edmontons Second CRC de enige "nieuwkomers" — kerk in West Canada die gesneuveld is. Daar ik er slechts vier jaar lid van geweest ben weet ik niet in hoeverre het vergrijzen van de gemeente heeft bijgedragen aan haar ontijdig eind. Maar er is geen twijfel aan, dat dit probleem al veel zorgen gebaard heeft in onze kring. Voor de bejaarden zelf, voor hun kinderen, en — niet in de laatste plaats — voor hun kerkeraad.

Denk even aan de lichamelijke kant van het probleem: mensen die uit hun huis moeten, of die zo slecht ter been worden dat ze de kerktrap niet meer op kunnen komen. In mijn gemeente werd vorig jaar het besluit genomen om een lift in het kerkgebouw te installeren. Een maatregel die door gehandicapte leden op hoge prijs gesteld werd.

Wat kerkbezoek betreft ben ik bang, dat zo'n uitgave echter weinig verschil zal maken in een vergrijzende gemeente. De meeste afwezigheid daar is te wijten aan het feit, dat zoveel leden trotse grootouders zijn. Opa en Oma (Pake en Beppe) van kleinkinderen die verspreid wonen "van hier tot gunter" en met een verbijsterende snelheid opgroeien. Wie kan niet begrijpen dat ze daar graag een oogje op houden? Dat ze soms op zondag hun bank open laten doet niets af aan hun warm meeleven.

Nee, wat zo'n gemeente echt schade kan doen is een groeiend aantal leden, dat elke winter voor maanden naar het zoele zuiden trekt. Van hun actief meeleven komt weinig meer terecht, omdat ze in het drukke gedeelte van het kerkelijk jaar onzichtbaar en onbereikbaar zijn. Waar het percentage lustig rondreizende leden te hoog wordt zal het een kerk de das omdoen. Misschien moeten we er meer aan denken, dat pensioenering geen einde maakt aan onze verplichtingen als belijdend lid en onze persoonlijke verantwoordelijk-

heid, als kinderen van het Licht.

De vraag waarmee alle bejaarden zich vroeg of laat geconfronteerd zien is: hoe lang kan ik nog in mijn huis wonen? Ook op dit punt speelt gezondheid natuurlijk een belangrijke rol. Maar minstens even belangrijk zijn de familie-omstandigheden. Bejaarden die zo gelukkig zijn dat ze een paar lieve kinderen in de buurt hebben mogen zich wel bijzonder gezegend voelen. In dit land kunnen je kinderen ook 2.000 mijl weg wonen, een beetje te ver om Mom te helpen bij het behangen of Dad bij het sneeuwuimen.

Onze kerken hebben vroegtijdig ingezien dat we "geen woorden maar daden" nodig hadden om in de behoeften van oudere leden te voorzien. Dank zij hun samenwerking zijn er nu op verscheidene plaatsen in Canada bejaarden-tehuizen met een Christelijke atmosfeer.

Bejaardentehuizen

Het is echter duidelijk, dat de meeste mensen hun best doen om zo lang mogelijk in hun eigen huis en buurt te blijven. En dat is geen wonder: het kan een pijnlijke ervaring zijn om een omgeving waaraan je zo gehecht bent, opeens achter te laten. Geen boom of struik bloeit zo mooi elke mei, als die je eens plantte met de "assistentie" van je kleine zoon.

Natuurlijk is het wonen in een bejaarden-centrum niet voor iedereen aantrekkelijk. Of iemand zich daar gelukkig voelt hangt m.i. grotendeels af van haar/zijn eigen aard en aanleg. Ik heb mensen ontmoet die het er zo naar hun zin hadden dat ze het werkelijk betreurden niet eerder te zijn gekomen. Anderen verhuisden liever naar een gunstig gelegen flatgebouw, misschien omdat ze meer op hun "privacy" gesteld zijn.

Eén ding waarvan ik weinig goeds heb zien komen is het intrekken bij een getrouwde zoon of dochter. Dit eist zoveel blijmoedigheid en begrip (van beide kanten), dat een familie het slechts bij uitzondering kan opbrengen. Het is een regeling

die alleen aan te bevelen is in een noodgeval, en dan voor korte tijd, tot een betere oplossing gevonden wordt.

Ouderdomsproblemen

"Grijzer is wijzer," zegt men, maar dat is niet altijd waar. Grijzer kan ook betekenen dat je zelfzuchtiger wordt, dat je hoe langer hoe meer gaat hechten aan bezitten en status in de waan, dat slechts het beste goed genoeg voor je is. Je moet dan persé het weelderigste huis en de meest luxueuze vakantie hebben. Niet omdat je het zo nodig hebt, maar om anderen te imponeren en jezelf te overtuigen hoe "geslaagd" je wel bent. Het is eigenaardig dat, wanneer het op trouw en gul geven aankomt, we nog steeds een kerk zijn waar "de kleine luyden" het moeten opbrengen. Dat komt misschien, omdat de welgestelden meer geld nodig hebben om hun stand op te houden.

Grijzer kan betekenen dat je onverdraagzaam wordt, niet langer in staat om het goede te zien in anderen of het goede in hun standpunt te waarderen. Je vergeet dan, dat je zelf ook de wijsheid niet in pacht hebt en dat we in een geschonden wereld leven, waar de waarheid soms — en vaker dan wij denken — in het midden schuilt.

Grijzer kan betekenen dat je door tegenslagen verbitterd wordt, overtuigd dat geen mens in de kerk een zwaarder kruis te dragen kreeg. Je raakt dan zo geconcentreerd op je eigen verdriet dat God je alleen nog maar bereiken kan door je, om zo te zeggen, met een 2x4 op je kop te slaan. Voor het verdriet van anderen heb je geen oog meer, en je bent "niet thuis" wanneer er om je voorbede gevraagd wordt.

En grijzer kan betekenen, dat je een vervelende zeurpiet wordt, die constant over kleinigheden jeremiëert maar de zegeningen die God zendt volkomen over het hoofd ziet. Nee, grijzer is niet altijd wijzer.

Tini Van Ameyde schreef vroeger voor Calvinist Contact als Saskia "Onder de schemerlamp." Ze woont in Edmonton, Alta.



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Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

history

History for Protestants only



The Escape

The Adventures of Three Huguenot Children Fleeing Persecution based on historical facts

A. VAN DER JAGT



The Escape, by Anton Van der Jagt, 182 pp., \$11.95; *Augustine: The Farmer's Boy of Tagaste*, by P. de Zeeuw, 93 pp., \$7.95; *William III and Gustavus Adolphus II*, by Marjorie Bowen, 144 pp., \$9.95. All three books published in 1988 in paperback by Inheritance Publications, Box 154, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0. Reviewed by Robert VanderVennen.

It is a pleasure to welcome a new Christian publisher in Canada, Roelof A. Janssen, who has produced a surprising number of books in a short time. From the three books

reviewed here it seems that Mr. Janssen has a special interest in history, and a particular interest in keeping alive an appreciation for the heroic struggles for religious freedom which is our precious heritage today.

It seems to me that these three books have both strengths and weaknesses. I agree with the publisher's aim, but I find the books he has chosen rub against my grain in certain ways. For one thing, they are militantly anti-Catholic, which should be a problem for Canadian Protestants who live within Canadian culture. The tide is

going out on Christianity in Canada, and all who worship Christ — Protestants and Catholics together — need to stand up against our Christ-denying culture. These books are also heavily moralistic, and rather weak in literary quality.

The Escape, which has the subtitle "The Adventures of Three Huguenot Children Fleeing Persecution based on historical facts" is an exciting story which held my interest in spite of the weaknesses I have identified above. The typesetting in this book is not as good as in the others. Black and white drawings by Jaap Kramer illustrate the story effectively. I should think that children ages 10-14 would enjoy this book.

The book on Augustine is translated from the Dutch, though the translator is not identified. It is a story of the life of St. Augustine, especially of his earlier years before he settled into the church. I found it to be excessively moralistic, with good and bad so sharply etched that the book becomes more of a moral lesson than a story. It has rather large print, so is probably intended to be read by children. Drawings by Hein Kray add to the interest.

The two lengthy essays by Marjorie Bowen are historical sketches rather than stories. They are not so easy to read, especially for a person who doesn't already have a working knowledge of the European history of the times, because of many references to simultaneous events which you are supposed to know about already. The essay on William III and the revolution of 1688 (written in 1937) will be of interest to people of Dutch ancestry who may not know so much about King William's British experiences. The story of Gustavus Adolphus (written in 1928) illumines a part of European history which should be better known.

A hurdle in reading the Bowen essays is that they are written in the literary style of an earlier era with which I find it easy to lose patience. Her strident anti-Catholicism sets my teeth on edge, and we don't need to wonder who are the good guys and who are the bad — she keeps hitting us over the head with it. The publisher refers to King William and Gustavus Adolphus as "champions of our freedom." No doubt they are, but that seems to have been more relevant a couple hundred years ago than today, and I'd like the message served up in a different dish.

These books are visually attractive, and I find the cover designs especially good.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Support

"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts." Acts 2:46)

There's a story of a town that seemed to be on the route of every traveling evangelist and revival tour one summer. Week after week new tents were raised, choirs practised the same songs under different directors, shiny posters covered the cracks in last week's fading offerings, and preachers tried again to scare people out of hell.

And the people kept coming. Some were drawn by curiosity. Some wanted to compare each new pulpit thumper with the last. Some went to mock, others to find peace for troubled souls.

Every meeting ended with an "altar call." When the mood was right, huge crowds tumbled to the front in frenzied need. And even under the worst of preaching, a few folks still limped down, holding secrets to share with God and the counsellors.

But there was one person you could always count on. He came forward every time. No matter what the sermon, no matter who was being addressed, he was there. When the lights went low, when the preacher started praying, when the choir chanted "Just As I Am!", he felt the Spirit move within him. And always from the back he would begin his pilgrimage anew.

Eyes tearing, cheeks flushed, hands held high searching the heavens for God, he cried over and over the words of penitent desperation: "Fill me, Lord! Fill me!"

The evangelists counted every soul a fresh convert. But some in the crowds wondered how often a person could be saved. One skeptic could hold his thoughts to himself no longer. As the cries of "Fill me!" resounded one more time, this new voice challenged, "Don't fill him again, Lord! He leaks!"

Leaky Christians

Every Christian "leaks" when left alone. The Japanese writer Shusaku Endo writes of the strength of Satan and the power of doubt when one is isolated and companionless. His historical novel, *Silence*, methodically breaks down the faith of a missionary who feels the utter desolation of standing alone.

Coals lose their heat when separated from the fire. Plywood weakens when sun, wind, and rain gang up to strip one layer from the other. Asphalt crumbles when water severs the adhesive bonds. And isolation kills the Christian. Forgive and comfort the sinner, says Paul in II Corinthians 2. Don't leave him alone too long or he will be "overwhelmed by excessive sorrow." Don't let that happen, or Satan might "outwit us," and the grace of Christ will leak right out of his soul!

Body life

John Wesley evangelized 18th century England. His preaching was clear and direct. His call to conversion was simple and concrete. But the strength of his ministry lay in the organization he developed for discipling Christians, both converts and established church members. In the late 1730s he began to place every new Christian in a "band" of about six people. A spiritual director would make regular contact with each member, and weekly they would meet for confession, prayer, Bible study, and encouragement.

As the decade of the '40s rolled on, Wesley expanded this idea for all Christians, and created "classes." Groups of a dozen or so became small bodies of support and mutual strength. They met regularly. They asked each other about sins and victories, about testimonies and confessions, about service in the name of Christ and new insights from the Word and Spirit.

Wesley's journals contain notes of amazement at the weakness of the loner, and the strength of the group. Christians on their own die! But those who find fellowship, who meet together regularly (Heb. 10:25), who bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), grow in a "faith that can stand the light of day and endure the dark of night." (Christian Reformed baptismal liturgy).

How are you plugging the leaks in your spiritual life? Who needs your fellowship to stop drifting from Christ? "... Meet together" today!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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